

The
GARRICK CLUB



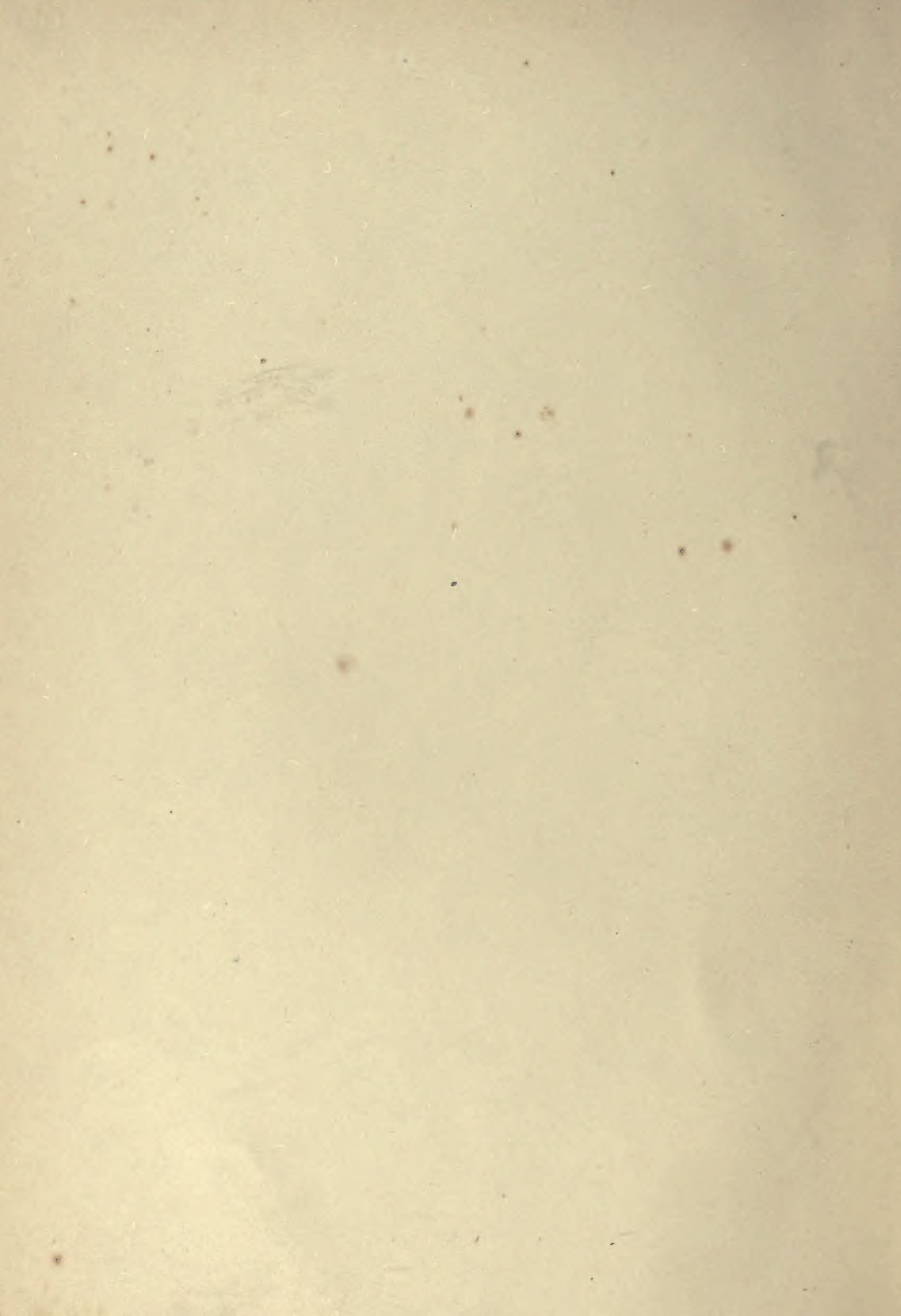
PERCY FITZGERALD



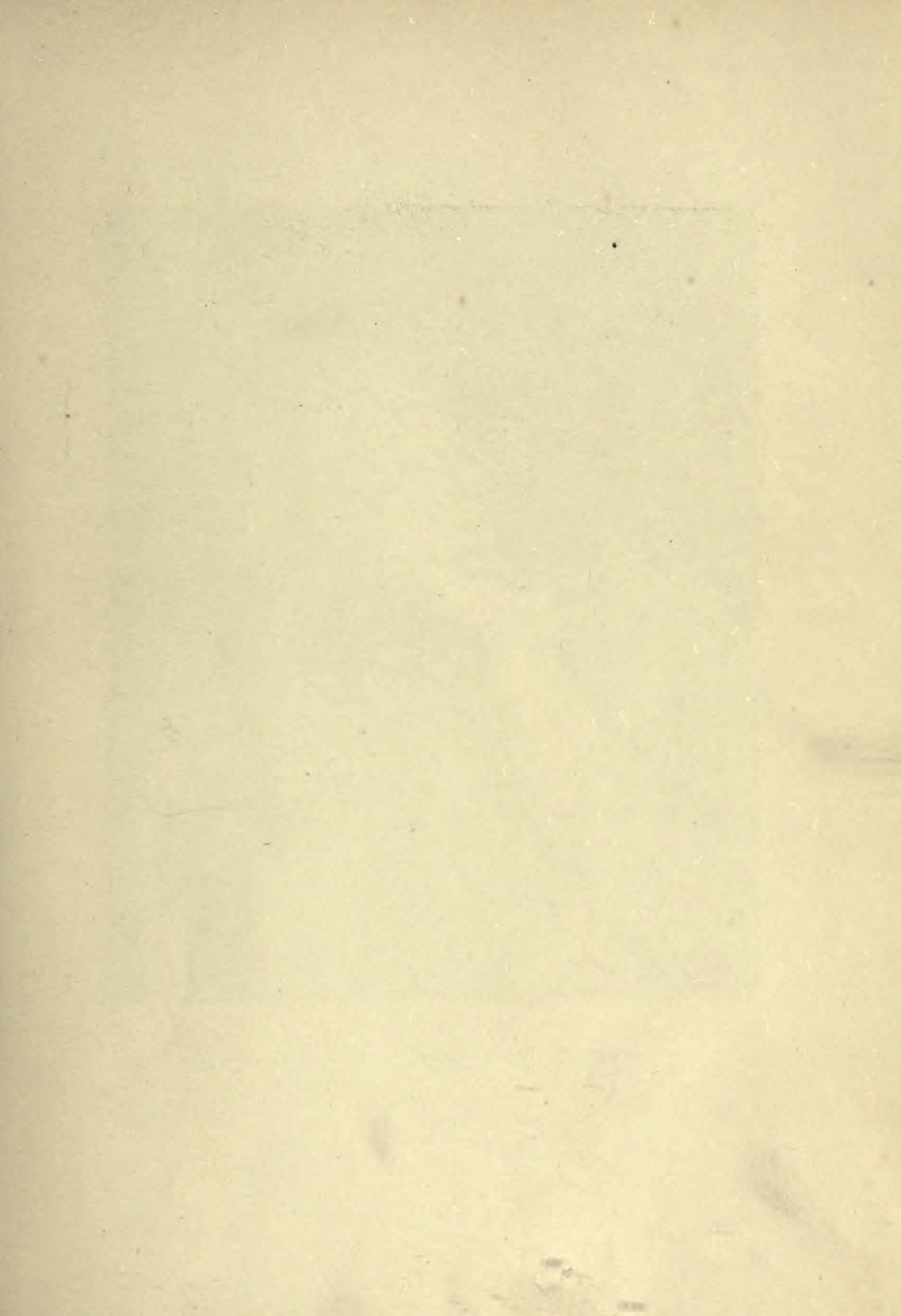
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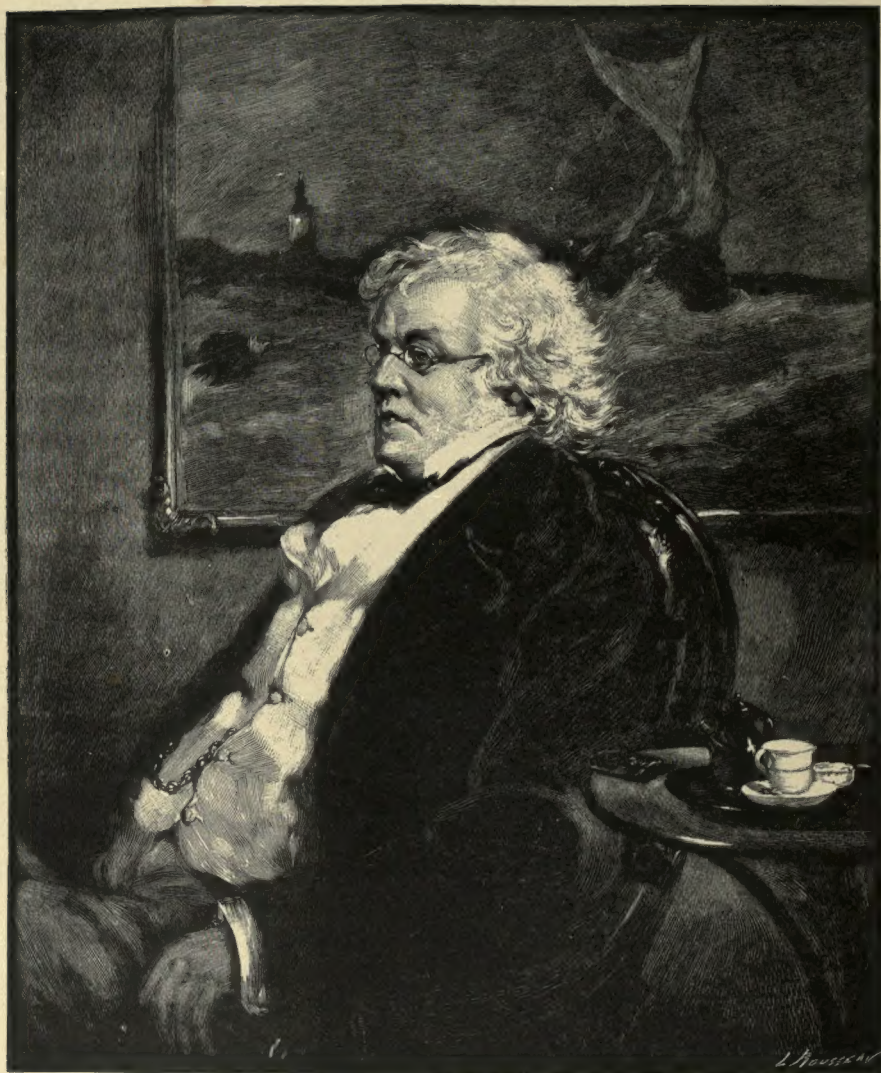


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THE GARRICK CLUB





W. M. THACKERAY.

From the original by Sir John Gilbert in the possession of the Garrick Club.

THE GARRICK CLUB

BY

PERCY FITZGERALD, F.S.A.

AUTHOR OF "THE LIFE OF DAVID GARRICK," "LIVES OF THE KEMBLE,"
"PRINCIPLES OF COMEDY," ETC.



LONDON

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Preface



THE setting forth the history of those agreeable places of meeting—the CLUBS—has always been found an enjoyable task for the readers as well as for the chroniclers. These “second homes” for so many men, when they are well established and in possession of traditions, offer dramatic associations owing to the important and brilliant personages who used to frequent such places: to the gay and agreeable atmosphere, and almost irresponsible conditions that prevail. Accordingly we find all the leading Clubs, such as Brook’s, White’s, the Reform, the Athenæum, Grillon’s, the Dilettanti, and others equipped with histories. That of the Athenæum was prepared by the late Rev. Francis Waugh—most faithful and enthusiastic of friends—and devoted as a child to his much-loved Club. It is contained in a very small volume, but ~~one~~ so packed with condensed information that it would have legitimately filled a fair-sized quarto. His modesty would not allow him to adopt that pretentious guise. At the time of his death he had just prepared a new and enlarged edition, which it is to be hoped will see the light later on.

Of all Clubs, perhaps the Athenæum and the Garrick have the most interesting and dramatic associations. They seem like stages across which all that has been distinguished in drama, letters, music, and art generally, have passed or streamed through their chambers. Many have belonged to both institutions, and when they

would sumptuously regale their friends, which there is little facility for doing at the Athenæum, have passed over to the Garrick, where they have a special guest chamber, a rare *cuisine* of choice wines. Such was the practice of the late Sir Edward Hamley, a brilliant soldier, professor, military historian, and most successful novelist—a combination of gifts not likely to be found outside of either these singular institutions.

The Garrick, in its early days, had been well stored with wits and humorists of the first class, leavened also by the more "Bohemian" members of the theatrical profession, pleasant soldiers and jovial peers. But in these later times it has become more like the usual type found in Clubland. Its theatrical influence has been more extended, and the choice *fin fleur* of the profession belongs to it. If not now so much the "haunt of Momus," and engenderer of wit and humour, it is because convivial humour itself has died away and is somewhat out of fashion. We "take our pleasures sadly," even in Clubs. But its influence has extended, and the fact of its not being a Club merely, but also a very remarkable Picture Gallery, has given it a place among London attractions. In this it is unique, for what other Club can boast of a Portrait Gallery of actors—the work of the first artists—nearly all admirable and spirited likenesses—unique, too, in being described in enraptured panegyric by Elia—choicest of humorists—that is, by Charles Lamb *lui-même*. Nowhere has this accomplished writer exhibited his descriptive talent and vivacity so vividly as in these essays. Here he *paints* in his own colours! One would surely like to see his picture or bust in the collection. It would be only a fitting tribute, for these two papers of his have spread the fame of the Club over all English-speaking regions. As we gaze on the speaking lineaments of these portraits, no "make-up" being interposed, the scenes in which they figured, the strange, adventurous, often grotesque incidents of their lives, rise before us.

There is no profession which has given us so many original or entertaining characters as the stage. No other is so richly stocked

with personal memoirs, recollections, adventures, sayings and doings. Mathews the Elder, Colman, Garrick, Tate Wilkinson, O'Keefe, Foote, Planché, Edmund Yates, Sir F. Burnand, and dozens more—what agreeable chroniclers all these have been. How many humours, jests, and ludicrous situations have they furnished! Exuberant as are the old dramatic memoirs, no one can say that the succession has not been kept up and the narrators of our day are not as amusing.

The traditions of Thackeray alone, who loved and haunted the place, and identified himself so fondly with it, is a precious asset for any Club. "Boz," alas! had but disagreeable associations with the place, but even this episode makes a part of its history. Mathews, Poole, Theodore Hook—these are names to conjure with. Any one familiar with the dramatic memoirs will find that each face will remind him of some droll story or interesting illustration. The striking scenes from dramas, such as that of Garrick and Mrs. Pritchard in *Macbeth*, are of serious importance in the history of acting, and of *mise en scène*.

No words can sufficiently describe the interest and value of these theatrical scenes, particularly those limned by the admirable and brilliant Zoffany. They are the next thing to the living thing. But the moral is that the faces and figures, *i.e.*, the acting, dominate all. The humanity, the action is the one prominent thing; background, dress, furniture are as nothing. There is something fascinating in them, and we are drawn back to them again and again.

These portraits are the highest tribute conceivable to the merits of the players of a century or so ago, and a corresponding reflection on the expressionless nature of the acting of our time. The portraits so thoughtful and brightly intelligent prove that the old comedies in which they were trained were stones on which they *whetted*, as it were, their observation and characters. Any one who has carefully read over Elia's criticism will feel this as he passes from face to face. Therefore it is that no one at the Garrick Club can ever lack company—and the best of company. He may find his mates dull or humdrum, but he has all these great folk to fall back upon.

As the Club does not permit any of its portraits and other treasures to be copied or reproduced, it may be necessary to mention that the illustrations which are described as being "after originals" in the possession of the Club, are really from engravings made of those very originals, and already in possession of the Public.



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PART I

THE CLUB AND ITS EARLY MEMBERS

PART I

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CHAPTER I

THE OLD CLUBHOUSE



THE Garrick Club was established only four years after another famous social club—the “Pickwick”—and was much on the same lines. The founder was Mr. Frank Mills, described by his friend Barham as “a very good-tempered *but* flighty man.” He lived in Brooke-Greville’s house at Parsons Green, where the pleasant Ingoldsby recalled a dinner given in 1837, the guests being Beazley, the architect and dramatist, James Smith, and Theodore Hook. It was no doubt a lively party. The objects of the Club were aspiring enough, viz., to found a society “in which actors and men of education and refinement might meet on equal terms,” an oddly phrased paragraph, but very significant of the social position of the actor in 1831. It seems to convey that these two classes had not hitherto been meeting on equal and independent terms ; there was a shadowy distinction made between “men of education and refinement” and the players, with whom the latter were not likely, without such assistance, to come in contact. A hope was also indulged in that it would promote

"easy intercourse between artists and patrons," as though the latter persons, being so superior, were not likely to meet the former. At the Club, they might do so, and the "easy intercourse" might lead to transactions mutually advantageous and agreeable. These professions help us to contrast the position of the artist nowadays with what it was over seventy years ago.

The Club was also instituted, says one of the reports, "for the purpose of bringing together the patrons of the drama and its professors, and also for offering literary men a rendezvous; and the managers of the Club have kept these general objects steadily in view. Nearly all the leading actors are members, and there are few of the active literary men of the day who are not upon its list. The large majority is composed of representatives of the best classes. The number of members is limited and the character of the Club is social, and therefore the committee is compelled to exercise their vigilant care, for it is clear that it would be better that ten unobjectionable men should be excluded than one terrible bore should be admitted." We do not often come on this sort of thing in the reports of clubs.

For the opening dinner, in 1831, that lively Canon, Mr. Barham, wrote lines which were "set" by Hawes, the composer, gentleman of the Chapel Royal, and a member of the Club, in the form of a glee:—

Let poets of superior parts
 Consign to deathless fame
 The larceny of the Knave of Hearts
 Who spoiled his Royal Dame.
 Alack! my timid muse would quail
 Before such thievish cubs,
 But plumes a joyous wing to hail
 Thy birth, fair QUEEN of CLUBS.

Not a very brilliant effort for such a wit and on such an occasion.

The original Club-house, which was at No. 35, King Street, was a snug, old-fashioned tenement, having been for many years

"Probatts' Family Hotel." I have been assured by an old Londoner who recalls the Club accurately, that the house—next door towards the market—is almost an exact *replica*, and is approached in the same way. But it had more interesting associations. For, before its Hotel era, it was the residence of that incomparable comedian, William Lewis, an airy, light performer, of whom there are no less than four portraits in the Club. An addition was made to the house in the shape of the large and comfortable Smoking-room which was built out over the "leads," and where many an odd discussion and curious scene occurred. Here, the generous donor of the pictures, Mr. Durrant, had a fixed seat, a special corner, kept for him, by the fire, and was indeed, as he deserved to be, treated with much deference and respect. Apart from his claim, he was a most amiable and good-natured man.

The Coffee-room was for members only. Thackeray dined there for the last time in a niche where hung the picture of Lord Ogleby. On the mantelpiece were Garrick's candlesticks, and Kean's ring. There was a picture of Charles Kemble as Charles the Second, under which the actor often sat in advanced life: and it amused people to contrast its life and freshness, with the old face beneath. This portrait was, of course, the fine piece by Clint—of Captain Copp.

On the evening of the Club's removal to its new quarters, Shirley Brooks supplied a lively description of the old place to one of the papers. The visitor, he says, will recollect that he went up one side of a double flight of stone steps from the street, and entered a rather gloomy hall, in which was a fine bust of Shakespeare by Roubillac, and some busts of celebrated actors, also the tablet recording Mr. Durrant's gift. On the left was the strangers' Dining-room—"in which, perhaps, more pleasant dinners have been given than in any room in London." Keeley's portrait by O'Neil hung over the fireplace. A long passage led to the Smoking-room, "which was not a cheerful apartment by daylight and when empty, but which, at night and full, was thought the most cheerful apartment in Town." Mrs.

Sterling's bright face looked down upon the smokers, and here was a statuette of one who loved the room—the author of "Vanity Fair."¹

It was indeed time that some form of recognition of the great profession should be made in some shape or other, as will be seen from the following strange instance of "taboo." It would appear that in the year of the formation of the Garrick Club, the old "Beefsteak Society" actually had a rule in force by which all belonging to the stage were excluded from it! This seems incredible, but there can be no doubt of it. Every other class was admissible, lawyers, authors, painters—even *managers*, provided they were not actors. It was applied in the case of Mathews, who felt the exclusion acutely. "I can never be happy," he said, "as long as Richards" (a member of the "Steaks") "lives, and is stout upon the point, as he told me that I am excluded by my profession from being a member. Will this be believed in 1845?" Hardly even in 1904.

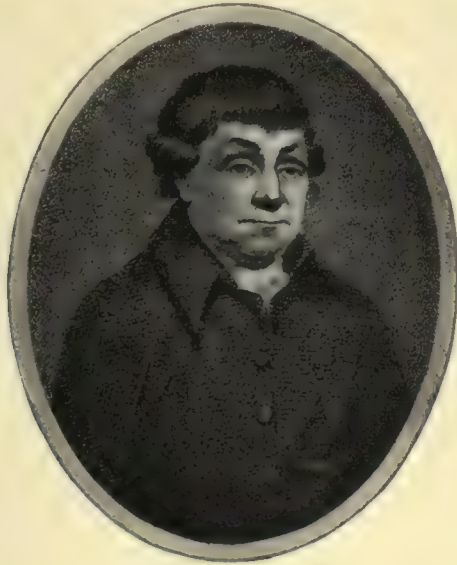
A less questionable exclusion was that of Campbell the poet—the author of the "Pleasures of Hope." Price, the American manager, who was then an important dogmatist at the Club, gave out as the reason that "after a certain period of the evening he was in the habit of breaking glasses that he had emptied, and decanters that had been full, to say nothing of large looking-glasses." Much, however, might have been indulged in the case of this eminent man.

Few clubs have been launched with a more striking and varied list of "original members" than the Garrick. Every department was represented, and included categories which have nowadays wholly disappeared. Where shall we look now for the irresponsible funny fellow, always ready with his jest or witty *mot*—the best of company—quite reckless of the consequences of his joke, so that he

¹ This clever little work represents the novelist in a familiar attitude—his hands in his pockets—and is now in the Drawing-room. Mr. Brucciani still publishes it.

succeeded—ready with his brilliant pen, in periodical or on the stage? This sort of being all but lived in the Club, which was his chief stimulant. One of the strangest notes of our times is indeed the almost complete extinction of gay, spontaneous humour, which supplied as much enjoyment to its happy possessor as to the listener. Some cynics have held that the utilitarian spirit of the day prompts the humorous fellow to set a curb on his ebullitions, and reserve them for “copy.”

It will be interesting now to learn who were the original



MOODY.

members, and it must be admitted a more brilliant and varied miscellany of clever and pleasant beings could hardly be imagined. We might strive in vain, at the present time, to call together such a collection of choice spirits, most of them remarkable for *something*. I have marked in italics the more notable names :—

Abbott, Hon. J.
Abbot, William
Allen, Viscount
Adolphus, John
 Anglesea, Marquis of
 Arbouin, James
Arnold, Samuel James
 Aubin, Thomas
Ayrton, William

Berens, Richard
Braham, John
 Broadwood, Henry
 Brudenell, Lord
 Bandinell, James
Barham, Rev. Richard Harris
Barnard, Gen. Sir Andrew
Bartley, George
 Beaufoy, Charles
 Beauchamp, Lord
 Bevan, John
Beazley, Sam
 Bedford, George
Belfast, Earl of

Caldwell, Charles
 Campbell, Walter
 Capel, John, M.P.
 Cartwright, Samuel
 Castlereagh, Lord
 Chaloner, Colonel
 Charleville, Lord
 Church, William
 Claggett, Horace

Clanricarde, Marquis of
 Clarke, Joseph
 Clerk, Sir George
 Coles, John
 Cooke, Thomas
 Coventry, Earl of
 Cowper, Hon. W.
 Cox, John
Curtis, Sir W., Bart.
 Cornwall, Frederick

D'Orsay, Count
 Dawkins, John
Devonshire, Duke of
Downton, William
Duncombe, T. S., M.P.
Dunn, William
Douro, Marquis of
Durrant, John P.
 Duruset, John B.

Egerton, Lord Francis
 Ellis, Charles
 Errington, Rowland
 Errol, Earl of
 Evelyn, Lyndon

Fallowfield, Rev. W.
 Farquhar, Sir Horace B.
Fife, Earl of
FitzClarence, Lord Adolphus
 Foley, Edward
 Foster, Frederick
Freeling, Sir Francis, Bart.

Gardner, Lord
Gordon, Robert, M.P.
Gore, Charles
Gower, Lord Francis Leveson
Glengall, Earl of
Graham, Marquis of
Gresley, Sir Roger
Greville, Brook
Greville, Henry
Grière, Thomas
Gronow, Captain
Goodlake, Sir Henry
Gye, Frederick
Gilmer, John

Halifax, Thomas
Hardwich, John
Hanrott, Philip
Harley, John P.
Harrison, Thomas
Harrison, William
Hill, Lord Arthur, M.P.
Hodgson, Fredk., M.P.
Hook, Theodore E.

Jerdan, William
Jones, Richard

Kemble, Charles, F.S.A.
Kinnaird, Lord

Lake, William
Lamb, Rt. Hon. W. G., M.P.
Leigh, Chandos
Lennox, Lord W.

Linley, William
Littledale, Joseph
Lockhart, J.
Lowdham, Lewis
Lowther, Lord, M.P.

Mackinley, Thomas
Maclew, Andrew
McQueen, Potter
Macready, William
Martyn, J. Mountjoy
Mathews, Charles
Mathews, Charles James
Metcalf, Thomas
Meyrick, William
Mildmay, Captain G.
Mills, Francis
Moore, Edward
Motteux, John
Mulgrave, Earl of
Murray, John

Oakeley, Benjamin
Oakley, Richard

Parke, James
Parkinson, J.
Parkinson, Jos.
Peake, Richard B.
Phipps, Hon. C.
Phipps, Hon. E.
Planché, J. R.
Polhill, Capt., M.P.
Poole, John
Portarlington, Earl of

Powell, John Allen
Power, Tyrone

Ramsbottom, John, M.P.
Raymond, George
Reynolds, J. Hamilton

Salomons, J.
 Saltoun, Lord
 Savory, Thomas Field
 Segrave, Lord
Sheridan, Francis
Smart, Sir G.



SIR JOHN SOANE.

Robertson, Henry
Robins, George H.
 Robinson, Sir G.
Rogers, Samuel
Russell, Lord John
 Ryde, Henry

Smedley, Henry
Smith, James W.
Soane, Sir J., R.A., F.R.S.
Stanfield, Clarkson, R.A.
Stanhope, Hon. Col.
Stanley, W. Massey

Steer, George	Warrender, Sir George
<i>Stephens, Lyne</i>	Webb, Sir Richard
<i>Sussex, Duke of</i>	Westmacott, Richard, junr.
<i>Sydney, Lord</i>	Wharton, G. B.
<i>Talfourd, Mr. Justice</i>	Wigram, Henry L.
Thistleton, Charles	Wigram, James
Thynne, Lord Edw.	Willet, Henry R.
Tullamore, Lord	Williams, Richard, junr.
	Williams, Capt.
Vaughan, Rt. Hon. Charles	Wilson, Richard
	Wingfield, Richard
Walford, Thomas	<i>Wombwell, George</i>
Well, Charles Barry	Worcester, Marquis of
<i>Wallack, James</i>	
Walpole, Edw.	<i>Yates, Frederick, junr.</i>
Walpole, Robert	Young, Charles

In those early days the Duke of Devonshire, round whose birth fluttered a mysterious romance—was the president, but little more than an ornamental one, for he rarely looked in. The interest that this amiable nobleman took in Dickens's theatricals is well known—his kindness and “condescension,” the appropriate word, being unfailing. The vice-president was Lord Tenterden, the steward was one Hamblett, and the secretary, Doland.

In the Library is a large volume containing a list of all the members, from the first year—with the exact dates of their admission—as well as of their “removal,” a happily general phrase, which may signify either death, withdrawal, or expulsion. For the latter, however, there is a softened phrase, “erased.” Edmund Yates was thus “erased.” A few years ago there were several alive who had assisted at the founding of the Club in 1831, notably, Fladgate and Planché, friends of my own. There was still alive in 1899, one who was among the first members of the Athenæum Club founded in 1824.

In February, 1832, the opening was celebrated by a grand dinner,

at which the Duke of Sussex, who was the official patron of the new Club, presided. He was "supported" by a number of notable marquises, earls, &c., while the general company included all the leading dramatists and actors. The worthy and amiable Planché declares that it would be difficult to give an idea of the brilliance and sociability of the life at this choice season. "Since the days of Wills and Buttons, I question if such an assemblage as could be daily met there between four and six in the afternoon had ever been seen in a coffee-house; and the Club being formed on the principle that membership was sufficient introduction, the intercourse between men of all ranks was a feature of the place, distinguishing it agreeably from the generality of such establishments, where, as a friend of mine once remarked of one of the most celebrated, "It was as much as your life was worth to ask a stranger to poke the fire."

Planché knew all the early members—"Tommy" Hill, Poole, Mathews, Theodore Hook—and had plenty of stories of their droll ways and antics, which I have often heard him relate. He had a pleasant wit of his own—as when the tall Miss Barry, who was to play in his "Babil and Bijou," was imploring him to write some special verses for her—"Get Longfellow to do it, ma'am," he said.

What a pleasant company it must have been! What fun! What characters! How many of the "good things" in circulation were engendered at the Garrick—that is, at the *old* Garrick; natural enough when we think that Hook, Barham, Thackeray, Poole, and many of that choice kidney were about. Serjeant Murphy and Warren, Q.C., author of "Ten Thousand a Year," belonged to somewhat later times. Some well-known jests are associated with this pair—Warren, whose egregious vanity was immeasurable, being usually the butt. To him, Murphy was bewailing that the "fish had failed" at a certain nobleman's table, where he was dining. "I suppose," quoth the other, "they ate it all up in the parlour." But this mot has been attributed to many others. "Do tell me," roared out Murphy, when eating his dinner in the Coffee-room, "what became of Gammon" (in the novel). Warren affected not to hear, but

it was again roared at him, when he answered : " They made him a Serjeant and he was never heard of afterwards." This was a good retort, as it exactly described Murphy's own case. It would have been pleasant to meet here T. P. Cooke, the hero of " Black-eyed Susan,"



R. H. BARHAM (INGOLDSBY).

who walked the Club with nautical air, a true British tar. I remember him myself on the boards in his decay—as Long Tom Coffin, I think.

Ingoldsby, compelled by ill-health to stay in the country, pined for news from his favourite haunt, and once addressed to some friend

this pleasant lament. It shows how affectionately devoted the old frequenters were to the place.

"Ye Garrickers making your sport
As ye revel in gossip and grub,
O, send some endearing report
Of how matters go on at the Club.

The Committee, O say, do they send
A blessing—or ban—after me?
Mr. Gwilt, does he duly attend
To his salad and little *roti*.

David Roberts, that glorious R.A.,
Does he still smoke his hookah in peace?
Is Milligan there every day?
Is Mills a trustee to the lease?

Does the claret suit Thornton? And how
Does Lord Tenterden like the cigars?
Has any one yet in a row
Kicked impudent—down stairs?

Or say is the story a hoax,
Or one to be class'd among fibs,
That Murphy's upset with his jokes
Colonel Sibthorp, and broken his ribs?

Has Durrant got rid of his cough?
Are Savory's rheumatics quite gone?
And how do the dinners go off,
And how does the ballet go on?

Does Stanhope's good humour endure?
What are White and Sir Henry about?
Is Talford gone up to his Tour,
Or Arden gone down to his trout?

Does the cook keep his character still?
Has the fishmonger been in disgrace—
For in lieu of a turbot or brill
Substituting a horrible plaice?

Does Calcraft who saved us from blazing,
Still watch o'er our interests at night?
Does Ovey still drive up his chaise in?
Is Rainey, as ever, polite?

Charles Kemble, his nose, is it aching
 As yet from his fall, or got well?
 Was Harley decided in making
 Miss — a church-going belle?

Is Titmarsh on anything clever,
 Or bent on returning to France?
 Is Planché as bustling as ever,
 Avowedly going to dance?"

In February, 1836, Mr. Pickwick's own year, Barham dined at the Club with Hook, Lockhart, Brodrip, Hayward, &c. A very pleasant evening it was, he says, as we may imagine. "Hook was in good spirits, Lockhart in good humour." Hook gave, in an elaborate speech, "The Blackguards of the Press," for which Lockhart returned thanks.

One of the benefactors of the Club was Mr. Lewis Crombie, a solicitor, who retired to Aberdeen, having succeeded to an enormous property by the death of an uncle. He started newspapers, one of which had the odd name of *The National Omnibus*. "He was an excellent friend of mine," says Barham with an unconscious quaintness, "and used to send me whiskey and cheeses from Scotland." Such presents are, naturally, great elements in these convivial friendships. He also made the Club a present of his collection of all the theatrical pieces published between 1800 and 1835, which, together with others of an earlier date, had cost him nearly £200. They are, or were, kept in a press by themselves.

Yates speaks of one of the toppers in the old Club, as a certain "J.D., who drank and swore in the old way." This may have been Joseph Douglas, a barrister, whom Barham describes as "a very gentlemanly man, *but* fond of his bottle, who used to sing Northern songs, after a fashion." He died in a very painful way. Living alone in Temple Chambers, he was seized with illness in the middle of the night, on a Christmas eve, fell down and died from loss of

blood. Those below heard him staggering about and groaning—but, “as he was in his usual state,” they took no notice.¹

A well-known figure at the Club was a fast, and also “loose,” person, one Cannon, a Macaroni parson, who, for a time, had enjoyed the favour of the Regent, and had been dismissed summarily. Asked, one night, at Carlton House, to praise a song the Prince had sung, Cannon frankly said that he could not admire the performance. The Prince, in his exuberant way, declared that “there was no man in England could sing it better.” Later in the night, Cannon asked H. R. H. for a pinch of snuff—an accepted method of securing partiality or compliment—when the Prince, instead of, as expected, holding it open for him, handed it to him and turned on his heel. More mortifying still, an equerry came later to demand the box. Cannon said it had been given to him, and an awkward dispute followed, which ended in his being told never to present himself again. This poor creature had a jovial but still wretched life. He was always a diner at the pleasant Garrick parties, but the sybarite parson is not a pleasant being.

William Linley, brother of the charming Mrs. Sheridan, was a person of equal good nature and simplicity, and a general favourite. He always had a table marked for his own in the Dining-room. He, however, rather bored his friends by reciting long quotations from Shakespeare and other writers. An amusing scene that occurred in this connection will show what very droll spirits these Garricks were. Reciting the witches’ scene he had got as far as the

When the hurly-burly’s done,

when Barham interrupted him, protesting his astonishment at his adopting so nonsensical a reading. There was no such word in Johnson.

¹ This recalls the death of Chenery, sometime editor of the *Times*, which took place in the same abandonment. He died in Dane’s Inn, I think in the night, and without assistance.

But you find it, one said, in Shakespeare—though only in the second folio. The others have the true reading :—

When the early purl is done,

i.e., when we have had our breakfast. The other was confounded and at last said, "Oh, nonsense." An appeal was made to Steevens' edition, and one of the wags read out a long imaginary note in favour of the reading. Beazley, the architect, then gravely quoted another gloss :—

When the Earl of Burleigh's done,

i.e., when we have cheated and deceived him. And so it went on.

In March, 1834, we hear of another pleasant dinner at the Club, Williams, the Banker, in the chair, Fladgate as Croupier, Charles Mathews *père*, Westmacott, Tom Hill, W. Beloe, and John Murray. Hook was there, of course, and looked very blank, we are told, on finding that he made the thirteenth guest, but was assured that Charles Young was expected. (It does not appear that he came.) Mathew then described Suett's funeral, one of the *mourners* taking off the deceased's voice in the coach, to the alarm of the others. Elia also has a quaint anecdote of this funeral. It is curious, too, what a number of noble persons "with a past" frequented the place. The pleasant, roystering Lord Ernest Bruce, Lord Conyngham, who, Barham says, owed £83,000; Lord Edward Thynne, who had Bill transactions with Tom Duncombe, Lord Deerhurst, and others. It was odd to find Augustus Craven, husband of the delightful author of the *Recit d'une sœur*, in such company. Of Charles Kemble it is said never was man more hopelessly deaf, an instance of which has often been told, though the *locus in quo* has been shifted from the Garrick to the Athenæum. A terrific thunderstorm was raging, which filled every one with terror. The actor was reading, and read on tranquilly. "I think," he said, at last, looking up and noting the darkness, "*I think we are going to have thunder!*"

There was also the once celebrated INGOLDSBY. I say "once

celebrated," for the famous Ballads are now more talked of than read. There is certainly a marvellous power of grotesque rhyming, but the



thing seems overdone, and it forms rather laborious reading. "Not a penny the worse," rhyming to "curse" still does duty as a favourite stock quotation. My old friend Richard Bentley, one of the



THE DINING HALL, GARRICK CLUB.

early members, who had an admirable knowledge of this profession, at one time furbished up the old works, and by issuing handsome illustrations, succeeded in giving new life to the book, issuing edition after edition, the "Carmine" and others. Sydney Smith was not a member, and had, of course, a much higher order of wit, but James Smith, one of the authors of the immortal "Addresses," was; his brother Horace was not. It is now, indeed, astonishing to think how rich was the Club in this "line" of humorists, and it was wonderful to think that at the same period it held such men.

In 1855 one of the members, Alderman Moon, became Lord Mayor of London—and he very hospitably remembered his brother members on his elevation, inviting all to dine with him at the Egyptian Hall, where a regal Banquet was set forth. I fancy this is the only occasion on which a Club has dined at the Mansion House.

As the years rolled on the old house in King Street was found too contracted to furnish accommodation for the members. There were also ambitious aspirations, natural enough, of having a suitable *locale* that would rank with the other London clubs. One cannot too much commend the site chosen, as retired as it was appropriate, in Garrick Street, close by that of the old haunt, within a few hundred yards of Covent Garden, and with the busy Strand just behind.

The present Club house is an imposing building in Garrick Street, Strand, though somewhat sombre in aspect for a haunt of Momus. It was opened in the year 1862, and the architect was Mr. Marrable. The interior is well laid out, and the happy mean is reached between palatial vastness and pleasant "snugness." The staircase is imposing enough, though not on the scale found in the Pall Mall Clubs. This air of comfort is no doubt secured by the cheerful decoration of the walls, every foot of which is covered by well-known, interesting portraits. The drawing-room is one of the most delightful rooms imaginable. It has quite a home look, and the members are not dispersed and isolated as they seem to be in the great chambers of the West End Clubs.

CHAPTER II

THE OLD TAVERN LIFE—"TOMMY" HILL AND "PAUL PRY" POOLE



THE foundation of the Garrick Club really marks a turning point in the social life and habits of the town. It was an attempt to give more correct and official shape to the old jovial tavern intercourse to which all ranks had been long addicted, but which was just beginning to die out. There were, and had long existed, innumerable drinking Clubs which met regularly at some alehouse. These societies had odd names—the "Keep-the-Line Club," where no "line" at all was kept, the "Fly-by-Nights," the "Owls," the "Finish," and so on.

Many of us will remember that curious supper-house in Covent Garden where "Paddy Green" used to reign, and where you could eat the succulent chop and the well-baked potato, floury and squeezed from its jacket in a napkin by the deft waiter. The eating was accompanied by very grave and improving music, the executants being choir boys, it was said, from the Cathedrals. There the walls were covered by a vast number of portraits, singers, actors of all kinds—in fact, another gallery, I believe collected by Paddy himself. Some were very good indeed, and all interesting. They drew the eye as you discussed the chop.

But it should be borne in mind that the jovial, roystering life in vogue during the first quarter of the last century was totally different to

the present general form of such gaieties. A life of pleasure nowadays is based on merely personal or sensual gratification. A man of this kind indulges in betting, gambling, the pleasures of the table, drinking, wasting his substance from love of self-indulgence. He has no wish to pass all the hours of the night in social joys, jovial good-fellowship, or in pleasant company. But it is curious that such was actually the aim of all these innumerable "clubs," people meeting each other there really for the sake of fun and frolic, and no doubt joviality, the killing of time in uproarious mirth and deep libations. Not but that the entertainment often took the shape of the lowest and coarsest buffoonery. At these places all were on a level; the poorest was welcome if he could but contribute something to the general frolic. There was a house in Wych Street where "the Court of Comus" was held about the beginning of the last century, and of which Raymond, author of the "Life of Elliston," furnishes an extraordinary account. "Precisely," he says, "at nine o'clock p.m. by the chimes of St. Clement Dane, the doors of this sanctuary were thrown open to devotees, who, like crabs, moved only at night, and the 'Flamen' of the sanded floor (Cussans) ascended the curule chair, before whom a pickled herring, some strong waters, and an ounce of tobacco were regularly placed. This celebrated youth was the son of an opulent West Indian, and educated at Marylebone School—an indubitable genius; but, like Farmer Ashfield's horse of that name, 'he would never work.' Cussans had, in fact, many opportunities of mixing in the best society, but the company he preferred to *mix with* was a cordial far more suited to his taste." The strangest orgies followed.

It is clear from this and other accounts that the actors engaged in these buffooneries devoted their whole time to them. This was their *life*. They did nothing else, and had nothing else to do. It was, of course, death in life, and all but certain, for the unhappy creatures in nearly all cases destroyed themselves, ending in the mad-house, or the hospital, or the prison.

The singular thing was that this disorderly mode of life was

thought no discredit, and was customary with decent livers, such as even the correct John Kemble, who liked to finish the night at these amusing and "rollicking" places, where he often took more "than was good for him." John was, sad to say, often drunk, but gravely drunk, in a haughty, reserved way. Like the Baron of Bradwardine, he could "carry his liquor discreetly." Such men in their cups are more entertaining than when sober. He used to go to the "Keep-the-Line" and such places. No wonder health and strength at last went. Not many know that the "glorious John" sleeps afar off in Switzerland, where he died. He was never of the Garrick (though his brother was), having died long before its foundation.¹

The chief note of the "funny" persons of those days was this perpetual buoyancy and unflagging spirit. They were ready at any moment with their jests, and revelled in their own jokes just as much as they did in other folks'. On the other hand, the note of our time is the complete disappearance of wit and humour, whether in word or act. Of course, the prime jester of the place, and whose name and image when the Garrick Club is mentioned at once rise before us, was the buoyant and irresistible Theodore Hook. He was certainly the most spontaneous and original of all our wits, were it only for that unmatched feat of his at the piano of extemporising verses on every one present. His best things, however, were not spoken things. "We'll do it in action," was his principle. These were not "practical jokes," as they have been called, but acted humours. How enjoyable, even to read of, are his devices for securing a dinner, carried out so brilliantly as to become high comedy. His mistaking the house, as it were, but behaving in so captivating a way while making his excuses that the host would all but compel him to stay. So with the landing on the cit's demesne

¹ Mrs. Mathews tells a more extraordinary, but well vouched, instance of this excessive drinking in a great personage—Mr. Pitt—whom her husband was invited to meet after dinner and listen to his talk. He found the great man sadly inebriated, piling up the wine-glasses into pyramids, then aiming at them with a dessert-plate! In this fashion he destroyed everything on the table.

by the river, and affecting to be a surveyor, sent to cut a road through the house. Mrs. Mathews, however, seems to say he was not the author of "the great Berners Street hoax," neither was he the



THEODORE E. HOOK, AUTHOR OF "SAYINGS AND DOINGS."

author of the famous Garrick gin-punch, with the recipe of which he has been credited. It is said to have been of the devising of Mr. Stephen Price, the American manager, and was composed of soda,

Maraschino, gin, and other things. "Boz," I well recollect, used to recommend a gin-punch made at the "Blue Posts," in Cork Street, and in his hospitable way held out the promise of an early banquet there, for the special purpose of trying it—"a reason fair." Of the brilliant Theodore there are also traditions at the Athenæum Club. It is reported that on one hot day he drank many jugs of iced punch, and then went off to dine with Lord Canterbury, where he seemed to perform badly. He said he was off his food. "My stomach," he said, "*won't bear trifling with*, and I was tempted to take a biscuit and glass of sherry before dinner." This poor, interesting creature literally killed himself by "hard living."

A typical instance of this welcome ingredient of the old times was Hill—"Tommy" Hill—who was really the perfect embodiment of these Old Garrick roysterings. All the choicest elements seemed to be grouped round him: and as he drew them out, so in their turn they would draw *him* out. He, indeed, "increased the gaiety of the nation"—that is of the Club: he was the kindly yeast of the place. There was a perpetual hilarity caused by his always varying humours—he was a permanent butt, and the man was so genuine and so good-natured that it was impossible to show him the least unkindness.

And here we may note how delightful a thing—and what a rarity too!—is *character*, real, original character! It is constantly supplying drama—fresh comedy, to the observer, and is an inexhaustible source of entertainment. Character, whether eccentric or humorous, is at its best when accompanied by a perfect good humour, that placidly invites and accepts the pleasant rallying of companions; otherwise it becomes that painful sort of *souffre-douleur*, the "standing butt," on which the witlings and the witless expend their foolish powers. But to return to "Tommy" Hill.

Planché's recollection of him is diverting enough. "He knew, or was supposed to know, everything about everybody, and was asked to dine everywhere, *in order that he might tell it*." His *specialité* was the accurate information he could impart of all the petty details of the domestic economy of his *friends*, the contents of their wardrobes, the

number of pots of preserves in their store-rooms ; of tales of their births and marriages, accounts of their tradesmen's bills ; whether



THOMAS HILL.
Original of T. Hook's "Hull."

they paid them weekly or quarterly—or when they could, he always happened to know, and never failed to inform you when they couldn't. This "tittle-tattle" provoked laughter, and brought him invitations

from its contemptible triviality. "*I never heard any one express the least regard for him when living, or regret for him when dead.*" A true club epitaph. Endless were the jests upon his age—of his recollecting the Great Fire of London—though one lively fellow maintained that it was impossible "he could have been in the ark with Noah, as the animals were all in pairs, and there never could have been another beast like Tommy."

He is described in one account as "Book Collector and *bon vivant*." He was a wealthy man, had a house in Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, "mighty convenient" to the old "Garrick," and another choice establishment at Sydenham, a small cottage. There he used to invite down of a Sunday all the choice spirits of the *coterie*, the Kembles, Hook, Campbell, Smiths, &c. In that pleasant book—Mrs. Mathews' account of her husband—which is full of fun and wit, not merely in words, but in action, these meetings are described.

He died in 1840, and his friend Barham lamented his loss in a very vivacious sketch. "Poor 'Tommy Hill!'—for by that familiar appellation he was ever spoken of by all who knew and loved him—is gone from among us. We say not that a 'star has fallen from heaven,' yet has one of the kindest of spirits taken its flight from earth; one than which none ever existed composed of gentler elements, or more attuned to all social affections. He died at his chamber in the Adelphi, December 20th, and was buried in the catacombs under St. Martin's Church, December 28th ult.

"Mr. Hill was born at Lancaster in May, 1760, and came very early in life to London, where he carried on an extensive business as a drysalter at Queenhithe. While thus actively engaged, however, he found leisure to cultivate a taste for literature, and accumulated a very fine collection of old books, chiefly old poetry, which afterwards, when misfortunes overtook him, was valued at about six thousand pounds—a noble library! He was also the especial and generous patron of two unfriended poets, Bloomfield and Kirke White. 'The Farmer's Boy' of the former was read and admired by him in manuscript, and

was recommended to a publisher. By his influence in society, moreover, the public attention was drawn to its merits.

“He established a clever periodical publication called *The Monthly Mirror*, which brought him much into connection with dramatic poets, actors, and managers. He never omitted witnessing the first representation of any new play when in town. At his house in Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, but more especially at his cottage at Sydenham, he was delighted to collect around him the most brilliant wits, poets, actors, dramatists, and other men of genius of his time. John and Charles Kemble used generally to dine at his house in Henrietta Street on the first night of any new play in which they took a part, and went thence to the theatre. Many yet remain who well remember the agreeable symposia at his rural villa. Mrs. Mathews, in her entertaining ‘Memoirs,’ describes these social meetings :—

“‘There, hebdomadally (at his Sydenham house), were found a knot of the first talents of the day, and, amongst the perpetual advantages I derived from being the wife of a clever man, I was allowed the delight of always being a partaker of these intellectual treats. Our excellent and kind friend, Mr. Thomas Hill’s well-regulated hospitality was the theme of everybody’s praise and pleasure who ever visited him. The accommodation of Mr. Hill’s house and table did not, luckily, admit of more than could conduce to their mutual pleasure. Each party was well chosen and assorted, never exceeding a dozen; and I had the honour to occupy the only spare room, all other guests, who were too fastidious to be content with the accommodation of the neighbouring inn, returning to town. Now and then a lady would share my short interval of drawing-room retirement; but this did not so often occur as it otherwise would. What happy days were those!’

“In his friend Mr. Hook’s clever novel, ‘Gilbert Gurney,’ we find the following sketch, which will be instantly identified as a portrait of Mr. Hill :—

“‘His plump rosy cheeks were purpled with warmth and kindness as he held out his hand to take mine, and protested that I was the

very man he wanted most particularly to see. Hull was a very extraordinary person. He knew the business of everybody in London better than the people themselves. He happened to know everything that was going forward in all classes—mercantile, political, fashionable, literary, or theatrical; in addition to all matters connected with military and naval affairs, agriculture, finance, art and science—everything came alike to him—to *his* inquiring eye no mystery continued undiscovered; from his attentive ear no secret remained concealed. He was plump—stout—with an intelligent countenance, and near sighted—with a constitution and complexion fresh enough to look forty, at a time when we believed him to be at least four times the age; we had a joke against him in those days as to his antiquity, in which he heartily and good-naturedly joined, until at last we got him to admit—and I almost think believe—that he sold gunpowder to King Charles the Second, and dined more than once with the witty Lord Rochester.

““Wanted you to come and meet a few friends at my cottage at Mitcham,” said Hull—“all plain and simple—good wine, I promise you, and pleasant company—but you are such a fellow, my dear friend. *Pooh, pooh! don't tell me*—there's no catching you—eh, I say—I have heard all about the cakes, the cow, and the Countess, the Pandeans in the pavilion, and the dead dace in the drawing-room.” “What do you mean?” said I, not imagining it possible that events which had so recently occurred should have already obtained such publicity. “O, you dog,” said Hull, “*I* happen to know—my dear Gurney. You dined with Daly yesterday at his lodgings?” “I did,” said I, staring; “but how did you find *that* out?” “Find it out, my dear friend!” replied Hull, “I do nothing in the world but find out. I saw the boiled leg of lamb and spinach which you had for dinner—eh!—wasn't it so?” “Do you dine with him frequently?” said I. “Never, my dear friend; never dined with him in my life,” said Hull; “but I know where he gets his hock—six guineas and a half the dozen. Come down to Mitcham; you shall taste some of the very same batch. Great creature, Daly—magnificent style, I'm told—splendid service of plate,

and all that." "Plate!" said I. "Superb," said Hull. "I happen to know the fact." "My dear sir," said I, "I should say a dozen spoons and forks were the extent of his service, as you call it." "Well," said Hull, "what does he want with more? Too bad—the cakes—eh!—and the cow—all over town. However, now to business, as I have done work for to-day: when will you come to Mitcham? Name your time." "I shall be very happy," said I; "but what do you mean by having done work?" "Here," said he, drawing from one of his pockets a very small, dirty, black-letter book, "this is all I shall do to-day. My pursuit, you know—eh?—old books—rare books. I don't care what I give so as I can secure them. This is a tract of 1486—seventeen pages originally—five only wanting—two damaged—got it for seventy-two pounds ten shillings—Caxton—only one other copy extant—that in the British Museum." "And what is it about?" said I, innocently. "Why, I do *not* happen to know *that*," said Hull. "Then why buy it?" said I. "Buy!" exclaimed he, looking at me through his glass with an expression of astonishment, "I buy thousands of books!—pooh! pooh! millions, my dear sir, in the course of a year, but I never think of reading them. My dear friend, I have no time to read." I confess I did not exactly comprehend the character of the bibliomania which appeared to engross my friend.

"As for his hospitable invitation, I resolved to accept it, and fix an early day. "Mine is but a box," said Hull, "all humble and lowly. There will be a bed for you at the inn, and a garden full of gooseberries and currants to stroll about." "And pleasant pastime, too," said I. "I, for one, think the despised fruits of our country are amongst the most delicious." "Despised," said Hull, "pooh, pooh! nobody can despise gooseberries and currants like mine—I have thousands of them!—pooh! pooh! currants as big as marbles! and gooseberries larger than hens' eggs!" "I'll try them, depend upon it," said I. "What say you to to-morrow?" "My dear friend, the very day I was going to fix," said Hull. "To-morrow you come to me. Dine punctually at five. Early folks in the country—none of

your supper-time dinners there. Remember, a bed for yourself—capital stables for your horses at the inn—civil people—very attentive to all *my* guests—know it would not do if they were not—hundreds of people go there in the course of the summer from my cottage. Good day ! good day ! you won't come any further with me, I know you won't—city work don't suit you—God bless you !—pooh ! pooh !—remember five !"

" "Here's turbot, Mr. Bucklesbury, fresh from Billingsgate this morning. Sunday makes no difference with me. I happen to know the most eminent salesman in the market. Bless your soul, he wouldn't mind sending a boat express to Torbay for a turbot for *me*." "Very fine fish indeed," said, or rather snorted, Bucklesbury. "Fine !" exclaimed Hull. "Nothing at all, my dear sir, to what you have at home—eh ?—I happen to know—there's no man so particular about his fish as you." "I like it good when I has it," said Bucklesbury. "Is there any lobster sauce ?" "Any !" cried Hull. "My dear friend, there are loads of lobsters—thousands. Here, you stupid dog, bring some of those sauce tureens to the Sheriff."

"The conversation at dinner consisted of little more than a repetition of pressings and refusings, and of challenges to drink wine, and observations upon the wine itself. The dessert, after Hull's description of his fruit, was rather a disappointment. The currants had been gathered, the gooseberries stolen, but there were still "*bushels*" of apples ; and the cellar afforded the juice of the grape in its best possible state ; "hundreds" of bottles graced the board, and every disposition to do ample justice to the profusion of our Amphitryon was manifested by his much delighted guests. The conversation, so long as "reason maintained her seat," was not much more cordial or vivacious than it had been earlier in the day.

" "However, here, I suppose," said the Sheriff, "you are too fine to have such a thing as cherry-bounce ?" "Bounce !" exclaimed Hull, "cherry-bounce, my dear friend !—there's Dubs can tell you—I have gallons of it—make it by hogsheads—I have seven hundred pints of it in the next room."

“ Upon saying which, he rang the bell, and ordered the servant, first giving him a key and a caution, to bring forth sundry bottles of the boasted beverage—for let it always be remembered that Hull’s cases of what might be thought bounce—were all as genuine as this of the cherry-bounce—he *had* all the things he talked of ; but his magnificence in the way of provision was what one certainly was not prepared for ; and therefore, until a certain number of cherry-brandy bottles had been produced by way of ratification, it seemed almost impossible to believe the extent of his preparations for conviviality. Upstairs we went—the Sheriff, of course, taking precedence—and there we had our coffee, our *chasse*, and a little tranquillity ; and during this pause the Sheriff, next whom I was placed, began to talk to me. Our *tête-à-tête* was interrupted by the facetious Duberly, who, believing that the Sheriff was a saint, asked him whether he had any objection to a rubber. Before his answer was given, Hull, who watched his worship with an almost Koo-too-ing kindness, came up, and drawing off the barrister, said to him, “Dubs, Dubs, don’t be childish. No cards here on a Sunday.” “No,” said Duberly, “I am sure we shall have none, for you have none in the house.” “None !” exclaimed Hull, as usual. “No cards ! Come, come, Tim, you know better than that. I have got two hundred and fifty packs in this very room !”

“ A sort of doubtful murmur ran through the party, and the poet said something of “speaking by the card,” when Hull, getting rather angry at being doubted, proceeded to unlock a closet in the room, and the moment the door was opened at least twenty packs of entirely new cards tumbled out upon the floor. The astonishment was general. “My dear friend,” said Hull, “you ought to know me better. I never say what isn’t true. I bought these cards two years ago—best cards you ever played with. I never buy inferior articles—got them in a lump—two hundred and fifty packs—told you so—you may count ’em, Dubs—I see you laughing, Tim—you may laugh—count ’em as you would benefit tickets—eh—Tim—pooh, pooh—don’t tell me.”

“Mr. Hill had the *entrée* to both Houses of Parliament, the theatres, and almost all places of public resort. He was to be met with at the private view of the Royal Academy, and every kind of exhibition. So especially was he favoured, that it has been recorded by a wag that, when asked whether he had seen the new comet, he replied, ‘Pooh, pooh ! I was present at the private view !’

“About the year 1810, having sustained a severe loss by a speculation in indigo, he retired from business upon the remains of his property to his chambers in the Adelphi. In his earlier days he joined in some of the jokes and hoaxes practised by Mathews and others. We subjoin the following account, written by himself, of a frolic in which Mathews represented at an inn at Dartford a Spanish ambassador. He called it his ‘Recollections of His Excellency the Spanish Ambassador’s visit to Captain Selby, on board the *Prince Regent*, one of his Majesty’s frigates stationed at the Nore, by the Interpreter.’

““The party hired a private coach, of large capacity, and extremely showy, to convey them to Gravesend as the *suite* of Mathews, who personated an ambassador from Madrid to the English Government. Four horses, richly caparisoned, were attached to the carriage, driven by two smart lads, who were intrusted with the secret by the payment of a liberal fee. The drivers proved faithful to their promise. When they arrived at the posting-house at Dartford, one of the drivers dismounted, and communicated to the innkeeper the character of the nobleman (Mathews) inside the coach, and that his mission to London had been attended with the happiest result. The report spread through Dartford like wildfire, and in about ten minutes the carriage (having by previous arrangement been detained) was surrounded by at least two hundred people, all with cheers and gratulations anxious to gain a view of the important personage, who, decked out with nearly twenty different stage-jewels, representing sham orders, bowed with obsequious dignity to the assembled multitude. It was settled that the party should dine and sleep at the Falcon Tavern, Gravesend, where a sumptuous dinner was provided

for His Excellency and *suite*. Previously, however, to dinner-time, and to heighten the joke, they promenaded the town and its environs, followed by a large congregation of men, women, and children at a respectful distance, all of whom preserved the greatest decorum. The interpreter (Mr. Hill) *seemed* to communicate and explain to the ambassador whatever was of interest in their perambulation. On their return to the inn the crowd gradually dispersed. The dinner was served in a sumptuous style, and two or three additional waiters, dressed in their holiday clothes, were hired for the occasion.

“The ambassador, by the medium of his interpreter, asked for two soups, and a portion of four different dishes of fish, with oil, vinegar, mustard, pepper, salt, and sugar, in the same plate, which *apparently* to the eyes of the waiters, and their utter astonishment and surprise, he eagerly devoured. The waiters had been cautioned by one of the *suite* not to notice the manner in which His Excellency ate his dinner, lest it should offend him, and their occasional absence from the room gave Mathews or his companions an opportunity of depositing the incongruous medley in the ashes under the grate—a large fire having been purposely provided. The ambassador continued to mingle the remaining viands during dinner in a similar heterogeneous way. The chamber in which His Excellency slept was brilliantly illuminated with wax candles, and in one corner of the room a table was fitted up, under the direction of one of the party, to represent an oratory, with such appropriate apparatus as could best be procured. A private sailing-barge was moored at the stairs by the fountain early the next morning, to convey the ambassador and his attendants to the *Prince Regent* at the Nore. The people again assembled in vast numbers to witness the embarkation. Carpets were placed on the stairs to the water’s edge, for the state and comfort of His Excellency, who, the instant he entered the barge, turned round, and bade a grateful farewell to the multitude, at the same time placing his hand upon his bosom, and taking off his huge cocked hat. The captain of the barge, a supremely illiterate, good-natured cockney, was introduced most ceremoniously to the ambassador, and purposely

placed on his right hand. It is impossible to describe the variety of absurd and extravagant stratagems practised upon the credulity of the captain by Mathews, and with consummate success, until the barge arrived in sight of the King's frigate, which, by a previous understanding, recognised the ambassador by signals.

" 'Whatever Mathews did in this way must always in description appear comparatively tame. All who recollect his performances on his own stage must freely admit this. To be fully appreciated, it was necessary to hear and see him ; but the outline given of this adventure will be easily filled up by the imagination of those who knew him. The pen can but mark the field of action, and place *him* in the front of the battle.'

"Mr. Hill was the youngest-looking man of his age we ever remember. So remarkable was this, that by one of his facetious friends it was declared that the registry of his birth was destroyed during the great fire of London ; and the late Mr. James Smith would humorously relate his adventures as Goldstick in the reign of Elizabeth. These good-natured jokes Mr. Hill would enjoy ; indeed, he affected to keep his age a secret. He was a remarkably early riser, and, perhaps, to this cause may be attributed the cheerful and green old age that he enjoyed.

"The proximate cause of his death was a severe cold taken in a damp bed at Rouen during the autumn, from which he never quite rallied. About a fortnight ago he had a fall in his room, and broke his arm ; supposed by some to have been in consequence of a fit. This we are assured was not the fact. He died without a struggle, breathing his last as if falling into a tranquil slumber. His death was but the quiet repose of exhausted nature, her works were worn out, and ceased to act. His physician's remark to him was, 'I can do nothing more for you—I have done all I can. I cannot cure age.'

"Thus has passed away from us one of the most cheerful and kindest-hearted of men. Of him it may be truly said that in proportion as he was known so he was beloved. Our good old friend, farewell !"

We can hardly conceive of pranks of this kind going on at the present time. The perpetrators would have their jest terminated by a sudden appearance before the magistrate. In these practical days no allowance is made for such humour at the expense of authority.

Such seems to be the fate of all such jovial souls : they are destroyed in pocket or in health—and demoralised in character. A lively French Bohemian has gathered accounts of a number of well-known *viveurs*, which he has called "*Les soupeurs de mon temps*," intending to glorify them, and recording with many loving touches all their claims to admiration. One, for instance, always "ingurgitated" his champagne, that is, had learned how to pour a glassful right down his throat—as if down a pipe ! Another at a café would call for an invented vintage. But nearly all these heroes ended in the most pitiable way—mostly in madness, or with softened brains—and nearly all in acute distress.

Poole was a rare child of Momus and a true humorist. His "Paul Pry" still keeps the stage, somewhat varied and reshaped, as Toole used to deal with it, in whose hands, however, it seemed a little artificial. Poole's great work was "Little Pedlington," whose mere title has furnished a stock term. It came out a few months before "Pickwick," and its general tone and treatment may have influenced "Boz." It was remarkable that two such first-class books of humour should have come out in the same year. "Little Pedlington" is full of personal sketches drawn from his friends and fellow Garrickers. Thus he gives a humorous parody of one of George Robin's advertisements. I believe the prying Hobbleday is no doubt Tom Hill, but with some very mean strokes added. Daubson, painter of the "all but breathing grenadier," is certainly from an original ; so with the actors, and manager, of whom he had a vast experience. We are well accustomed now to Shakespearean travesties ; but Poole was one of the earliest workers in this line with his amusing "Hamlet."

Poole had a curious, chequered life as dramatist, novelist, essayist, critic. His latter days were spent in Paris, whence he

had his *entrée* to all the *coulisses*. It is clear from the following letter that his trusty friend "Boz" obtained his pension for him.

"CHRISTMAS EVE, 1850.

"MY DEAR POOLE,—On the Sunday when I last saw you I went straight to Lord John with the letter you read. I received a note from him saying that he did not bear in mind exactly what I had told him before of you, and asking me to tell it again. I gave him an exact description of you and your condition, and your way of life in Paris, and everything else; a perfect Diorama in little, with you pervading it. To-day I got a letter from him announcing that you have a pension of £100 a year? of which I heartily wish you joy. He says, 'The Queen in her gracious answer informs me that she meant to have mentioned Mr. Poole to me, and that she had wished to place him in Mr. Clarke's house, but found the society there was not such as he could associate with.'"

In another letter he gives this humorous account of a visit paid to him in 1865. "Poole still holds out at Kentish Town and says he is dying of solitude. His memory is astonishingly good. I see him about once in two or three months, and in the meantime he makes notes of questions to ask me when I come. Having fallen in arrear of times these generally refer to unknown words he has encountered in the newspapers. His three last (he always reads them with tremendous difficulty through an enormous magnifier) were as follows:—1. What's croquet? 2. What's an Albert chain? 3. Let me know the state of mind of the Queen. When I had delivered a neat exposition of these heads he turned back to his memoranda and came to something that the utmost power of the enormous magnifying glass could not render legible. After a quarter of an hour or so, he said, 'Oh yes, I know.'"

Dickens's kindness to Poole all through was unflagging and unfailing. He never lost sight of him, even when he sank into a state of squalid decay. I wish I could recall his description, given

to me in a railway carriage on the road to Gadshill, of a visit he paid to him somewhere in Paris, where he found him in a garret with grotesque surroundings that suggested Hogarth's "Distressed Poet," but I have unfortunately forgotten the details.

We find "Boz" writing to a friend about him when he was in



JOHN POOLE, AUTHOR OF "PAUL PRY."

Paris. "Le vieux P——, I have no doubt, will go staggering down the Rue de la Paix to-day with his stick in his hand, and his hat on one side, predicting the downfall of everything in consequence of this event. His handwriting shakes more and more *every quarter*, and I think he mixes a great deal of cognac with his ink."

When in July, 1847, "Boz" was busy getting up amateur theatricals at Manchester for the benefit of Leigh Hunt, another of his impecunious friends, he stipulated that a small share of the proceeds should go to Poole. "There is another celebrated writer whose literary career is at an end, and who has no provision for the decline of his life. There is no objection to its being known that this is Mr. Poole, the author of 'Paul Pry' and 'Little Pedlington,' and many comic pieces of great merit, and whose 'Turning the Tables' we mean to finish with at Manchester. Beyond what he will get from these benefits, he has no resource in this wide world."

My old and pleasant friend, W. H. Wills, "Boz's" editor, once sent me, from the *All The Year Round* office, a letter of his which he thought would be of interest to me as something I had written was mentioned in it. It is an extraordinary paper from the "shaky" handwriting, evidently done by trembling fingers. The address is Fitzroy Square, No. 8, and the date April 1, 1858.

"MY DEAR MR. WILLS,—You will give me little else to do, but thank you very many thanks for the Garrick Book. I have read it word for word with very great pleasure. I find it is by the author of a favourite novel of mine, "Never Forgotten." In Paris, many years ago, I knew a Madame Manuel' (one of the leading characters), 'she was half French, half Spanish.

"The Summary is a wonderful little volume. According to the *Times* Paris correspondent, the name of Garrique is still extant in Bordeaux, the person a scamp of that ilk (*vide* extract sent in Vol. I.*). Our good friend is doing wonders in America.

"Shall be glad to see him safe at home again. Herewith Mr. Stooks' certificate (without which they don't believe me) that I am alive at this moment writing.

"Believe me, yours very faithfully and obliged,

"JOHN POOLE.

"Mitchell once, on my recommendation, engaged a French actress, Mdle. Garrique.

“‘This illegible scribble has so completely fatigued me, knocked me up—or *down*, if you will.

“‘* No, here it is.’”

There is a significant incoherence in this “screed.” His head still runs upon the stage. It was melancholy to think that here was the brilliant author of “Little Pedlington,” of “Paul Pry,” and “Hamlet” travestie. I think always with pleasure of the chance that my humble writings should have given him pleasure.

Here too was to be seen Allen Powell, “commonly called *Milan Powell*, from his mission to that city to obtain evidence against Queen Caroline.” What stories *he* could tell! There was also Tyrone Power, the cheerful Irish comedian, who embarked in the *President*, and with the ship was never heard of more; John Frederick Polhill, M.P., the lessee of Drury Lane Theatre, one of the unsuccessful managers, who lost £45,000 on his speculation; Laporte, another manager; Richard Jones, of Covent Garden Theatre, who realised a handsome competency, and, retiring from the stage, gave lessons in reading and oratory to clergymen and others. Here was Abraham Hayward, who died only a few years ago—a remarkable Society man and writer, and anecdote monger, but who deserted the club to take up his abode at the Athenæum.

The origin of the dramatic library—a not very extensive one—was due to John Adolphus, the Barrister, who proposed that every member should present his duplicate dramatic books.

Next to Thackeray, perhaps, the most notable member was the Rev. Richard Barham. The life of this extraordinary character, who then so plentifully increased the public stock of harmless pleasure, was a singular compound of Hyde and Jekyll, somewhat after the pattern of those pantomimic figures which exhibit a serious face and dress, then, by turning round, show a comic presentment. He was a decorous clergyman, a minor canon at St. Paul’s, priest of the Chapel Royal, with various livings, and finally became divinity lecturer at St. Paul’s, where, as Dr. Garnett

tells us, "his energy, good sense, and good humour soon gained him the esteem and confidence of the chapter, led to his promotion" and "placed him in a more favourable position for literary effort." The more Bohemian side of his character exhibits him as the jovial comrade of Parson Cannon and other licensed and unlicensed humorists; the friend of Hook; the sayer of good things, and the haunter of the Garrick: in fact, as Dr. Garnett puts it, with a happy unconsciousness of the claims of the clerical profession, "The associate of men of wit and gaiety, making no pretension to any extraordinary strictness of conduct, he passed through life with perfect credit as a clergyman, and universal respect as a member of society." No doubt the clerical standard was then low enough, and we may at least admire the adroitness with which he contrived to assimilate both professions. The notes which he wrote on the members of his club show a general rollicking or reckless tone, with a sad knowledge of petty scandals.

One of the military *viveurs* who frequented the Garrick in its early days was Sir Henry Webb, formerly of the Life Guards, and who deserves record from a very whimsical and original *mot*. Devoted to music, he was asked how a concert speculator named Eliason, who had taken Drury Lane, and in whom he was interested, was getting on. Said Webb, "He is going on so well that he will carry everything before him—or—" after a pause, and slowly taking a pinch of snuff, "will leave nothing behind him." Which latter proved to be the case.

There is one figure which was long known to us, and who was indeed loved by all, whose spirit must haunt the rooms of the Club. This was the old amiable, gentle Frank Fladgate, whose portrait, a small thing, hangs on the walls and is like enough. There has seldom been a more interesting old man.

Even Barham, in his venomous notes, gives him this generous and affectionate praise: "One of the most polished gentlemen and good-natured persons I ever met. His father, an attorney in Essex

Street, left him nearly £60,000, much of which, however, his hospitable and generous disposition, which made him the dupe of designing men, occasioned him to lose. He lived at Brompton, and was one of the most popular members of the Club and a Committee man." Who that knew Frank Fladgate but will endorse this tribute ! It seems but yesterday since we would meet him slowly ascending the stairs, but it must be nigh a score of years since he paid his last visit to his beloved Club. Every one there regarded him with a sort of affection. He was "Papa" Fladgate. His quaint old-fashioned figure, not unrefined, his antique high satin stock, the shade over his eye, his stoop even—how familiar and matter-of-course was all this ! Always good-humoured, full of an amiable *bonhomie* to all his "children" whom he could scarcely see, hobbling about and clinging with desperation almost to his beloved old haunt : there was something really pathetic in this devotion. The truth was it was the pictures, the traditions, &c., which seemed to be the only things that gave interest to his remnant of life. They brought back to him his darling Kembles, Macreadys, Keans, Youngs.

It was a constant delight for me to get into talk with this veteran, who had mixed in the theatrical world in all its stages, and had known Kemble and Siddons and members of the Garrick School. His recollections were of the most interesting kind, for he had been a shrewd observer. Sometimes I would meet him in the Library poring over a play which he could not read, and most grateful was he on my volunteering to do this office for him. "On this hint he spake," and I thought it rather fortunate to be with a man who would show you in very vivid fashion how John Kemble played "the Stranger," giving all the business, tones of voice, &c. He was a most amiable being—always good-humoured and good-natured. I daresay there are but few now who can recall him, as he would enter the Club at his fixed hour, his green shade over his eyes, and wrapped in his cloak or mantle. Peace be with you, good old "Papa" Fladgate !

CHAPTER III

ALL SORTS AND CONDITIONS OF MEMBERS



ALL sorts and conditions of men, all types and professions, seem to have gathered here, even to auctioneers. The eccentric George Robins was a member. His grotesque encomiums of the "properties" he offered for sale delighted the wits. He would speak of "noble, beautifully interspersed demesnes," &c. Much of the jargon of the modern auctioneer has come down from him, such as "these *commanding* premises," "desirable mansion," and the "suitable for a nobleman, gentleman, or bachelor of *position*." He would thus describe "a mansion *seated*," not standing like a common house, "*on* a beautiful lawn, *adorned* by luxuriant cedar trees." A kitchen garden was "walled and *clothed* with the choicest fruit; stocked, cropped and planted." Better than all was the estate, with a "very *gentlemanly villa*" upon it. In the case of an advowson, "Mr. Robins had great pleasure in submitting this church preferment to the attention of the public." Poole introduced him into "Little Pedlington," and gave an amusing parody of one of his advertisements.

We find among the earlier Garrickians the Rt. Hon. William Lamb, M.P., well known as a polished minister and official, and even better known by his wife, the flighty Lady Caroline Lamb, distinguished for her insane attachment to Lord Byron. Some of the

various eccentricities of this episode are furnished by Lady Charlotte Bury in her *Memoirs*. Through all this exhibition, Mr. Lamb showed himself the most indulgent and tolerant of husbands, trying to believe and hope for the best, soothing and encouraging his



WILLIAM LAMB, LORD MELBOURNE.

erratic spouse. When the poor wayward creature was on her death-bed, he came to her and treated her affectionately, and suffered her to leave the world feeling that she was forgiven. He was indeed a gay, pleasant, and most endearing person. Later he became Viscount Melbourne and Prime Minister, the early favourite of the young

Queen, showing great tact and reserve, and advising her with all the interest of a sensible parent. I remember a profile toy, which was popular when I was a child, representing the Queen and "her lamb."

Planché, another early member, in his old age, was brisk and juvenile, and what is more unusual, good-natured and up-to-date. He was a most pleasant companion, and had as many stories as Hayward or Rogers. It was wonderful to think when talking to him that here was one who had supplied the great and interesting Weber with a "Story Book" for his opera "Oberon." He would describe the poor composer fretted and harried at rehearsal by the coarse matter-of-fact beings who were engaged in it. When one of the most beautiful numbers would not go smoothly—being probably "too much" for the singers—Fawcett, the blunt stage manager, said in his rough way, "It must come out," on which Weber leaped on the stage and distractedly shouted, "What for it shall *not* come out!" Planché also supplied Mendelssohn with a book for an opera, on the subject of the siege of Calais, but the composer, changing his mind, grew cool and declined to use it. I remember him in great elation at being called upon to supply a piece for Covent Garden—the strange "Babil and Bijou" venture; and the old writer concocted one of his literary burlesques of the old pattern in the Vestris days—full of delicate conceits and classical allusions. This kind of wit seems now very ponderous, and is all but unreadable—it supposed a too high state of culture in the audience. The business men of the speculation treated his work *sans ceremonie*—hacked and hewed it mercilessly, suppressed about half, and stuffed it with "wheezes" and bits of "fat." "Cut out the cackle" was in fact their principle. I recall the poor author's despair and agonising complaints, but he had of course to submit. He had other reminders of his lagging superfluous on the stage. I was once with him at a country house where he was most agreeable; but there was a nobleman of very plain and blunt manners, who would complain loudly of "old Planché's prosy yarns." He would not unceremoniously interrupt

him, but scarcely listened. On one occasion, the *raconteur* was relating one of his "leetle anecdotes," in which Sydney Smith or some one of that kidney was figuring, when the host said something to a lady half-way down the table; this brought a reply, others joined in, and poor Planché was left *planté* in the middle of his tale! I see his mortified air as he said, "My lord, you are not attending to me."

One of the most agreeable and amusing books is his "Memoirs," which are full of spirit and gaiety, and truly interesting. In his latter days he was much pressed for money, and had to give up his clubs, &c. Poor Planché! He was an excellent, amiable, brilliant, and most interesting man. It is extraordinary how soon the public forgets in these cases: though perhaps it would be more correct to say that a new public cannot be expected to retain the traditions of an older one that has passed away.

At one time he had the *entrée* of all the most important theatres, and was the fashionable writer, and it is astonishing what a vast number of "stock" and popular pieces he has written. Before the farce had "gone out" altogether, as it has done, it was hardly possible to find a programme without one of Planché's little curtain-raisers. It is enough to name the "Loan of a Lover," "Popping the Question," "Faint Heart never won Fair Lady," sheet-anchors of all amateurs.

Here was Richard Bentley, whose name used to figure in a stately way on his title-pages as "Publisher in Ordinary to Her Majesty." He was of the line of Murrays and others, who styled themselves and were styled "Mr." There was a strong personal element in his business and this was strongly asserted. It was the same with the old Dickensian house, Chapman and Hall, where each partner was well known and familiar to the community. Richard Bentley succeeded to Colburn of the *New Monthly*, and of Lady Morgan and others. In another fashion the redoubtable John Forster succeeded to Colburn, marrying his widow, the gentle and amiable Mrs. Forster, who also brought him many valuable MSS. and literary treasures.

Colburn was a little man, who, it is said, quite worshipped his amiable lady.

With Bentley and his "Miscellany" is associated a pleasant story, in which Barham's lively wit is shown. Bentley had been his school-fellow, as was also Hook, and in the point if made to one less intimate there would have been a spice of ill-nature. "I was thinking," said Bentley, in a ruminating way, "of calling it 'The Wits' Miscellany,' but now I think 'Bentley's' simply will be the best." "Would not that be going to the other extreme?" said his friend slyly. Admirable in its way, it has often been attributed to Jerrold, but there can be no doubt it was Barham's.

There were three generations of Bentleys, and I knew them all. Richard the first, "Her Majesty's Publisher in Ordinary," was a remarkable man in his way, always to be associated, however, with the mistake of having let "Boz" slip through his fingers. He was acute enough to discover the certain success of the young fellow and had secured him by agreement, but mainly owing to John Forster's diplomacy and pressure, he was induced to let off his victim, as he was considered to be. I must say I think, on the whole, that he behaved well; for he had Dickens bound to him and mortgaged *corps et âme*, but let him go for a consideration. I suppose he saw that, by and by, it would be impossible to have him as a willing worker, and so compounded. I never can forget my own obligation to him and his spirited encouragement—how he read one story of mine and said, "Write me as good a one as that, and I'll give you £150"—and so he did, and many a hundred more. I see him now before me, a little man with a pink face and white prickly hair. I knew also George the son, who was also my friend and supporter; and finally Richard, under whom the business was transferred to other hands.

It is rarely that we find a clubman that has taken notes of comrades *seriatim*, criticising them and touching them off in the most bitter and too candid fashion. This is what Barham did, though of course he did not venture to print his notes. They are, however, too good to be wholly lost or suppressed, and at the same time too

scurrilous to be published.¹ I have already quoted some specimens—here are a few more.

Lord Allen was a fast and eccentric lord, whose art criticism of his country was that "the English were capable of making nothing beyond a kitchen poker." He was called cantankerous Allen from a slight twist in his temper. Still he was always "a well-bred, gentlemanly man. Tom Darby married his sister and separated from her, which led to a lawsuit and quarrels with his noble brother-in-law." Thus his friend Barham.

Attwood, the sound and pleasing composer and organist to the King, was a member, but only for a year. Sir Andrew Barnard was a well-known personage, "one of the most finished gentlemen about the Court of George IV. and William IV. He was one of the most agreeable men I ever met." "There was a certain Captain G., supposed to be connected with the Royal family, who had eloped with the wife of a baronet and was living in the Queen's Bench Prison with the lady. This worthy person was proposed as a member by some injudicious friends, and were assured by the founder, Mr. Mills, *ad misericordiam*, I suppose, 'that there were not three people in London who would speak to him.' His name had, of course, to be withdrawn. Some of the committee had suggested that they should draw lots as to who should put in a *white ball*," a humorous notion.

The sketch of Bartley the actor, who stage-managed the late Queen's earlier theatricals, is pleasingly done. "An excellent actor, he was a most respectable man. As he was for many years stage manager at Covent Garden Theatre he laid by a competence. He was not, however, very popular with the profession, who thought that he played a double part between them and the managers. This gave rise to a joke of Keeley's when some one said 'There goes George not Georgium Sidus.' 'Yes it is,' said Keeley, 'Georgium any-side us.' He was originally a second waiter at an inn at Bath. He married

¹ They found their way to the United States where an "ingenious amateur" printed them.

Miss Smith, a capital actress, whose face somewhat suggested that of Mrs. Siddons."

Bartley is memorable as the person to whom young "Boz," then struggling on his way through London, addressed an application for an engagement at Covent Garden Theatre. Bartley had the instinct or good sense to receive the proposal favourably, and agreed to give him a trial, but an illness caused a change in the candidate. We may wonder what would have followed had he proved successful.

There was one Blackmore, a solicitor living in Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, who was admitted a member. "A most respectable, right thinking, but neither very gentlemanly nor a pleasant companion, very fond of playing the orator. He purchased a situation in the band of Gentlemen Pensioners, and looked in his uniform something between a general officer and a general postman." Thus the lively Barham on his co-mate. Blackmore belonged to the firm of solicitors in whose office the young Dickens acquired his profound knowledge of legal procedure and formalities. Two solicitors bearing their names belonged to the Club, and it is likely enough were "Boz's" employers.

The other solicitor was Charles Ellis, who was likely enough the partner—and who therefore must have recalled the young office clerk—and to whom he must have given trouble; for he is described as "a half mad attorney who was constantly drunk and as constantly quarrelsome, though very good-natured during his few intervals of sobriety." He failed in business in 1835. It will be noted what a regular sequence there is in these events, and in how lively a fashion they are touched.

Mr. Horace Cleggatt, we are told, "was an admirer of Madame Vestris." It is added that he retired to the Continent in 1834 on account of his embarrassed circumstances and was outlawed—a sequel that seemed to follow naturally enough.

Another member is described by the jaundiced Barham as "a pauper peer: went to reside on the Continent where he contracted a discreditable marriage. He was the son of poor

Lord G—— who cut his throat in consequence of his wife's intriguing with the Duke of Cumberland. He was then (the son) a Captain in the Guards, and was known by the *sobriquet* of 'Tommy Tombstones.'"

It will be noted that this cynical observer was chiefly regulated in his judgments of character by the "gentlemanly" or "genteel" manners of his subject. They might be drunkards or otherwise disreputable, but if good-humoured and well behaved they gained his suffrage.

A dreadful comment on the heartlessness of this sort of convivial life is revealed in this entry concerning a member, a certain "fast" baronet. "Died without having paid his subscription, which his successor and executor, to whom he left £20,000 a year, though a stranger in blood, *refused to discharge*, and suffered his benefactor's name to be posted in the club room as a defaulter to the amount of six guineas." This gentleman was after brought in as a member himself.

There was another member, a major, who was fond of acting, and to whom Price, the American manager, gave this high praise, that he was the only amateur who was worth a salary, and that he would have given *him* thirty shillings a week. This recalls the story of Garrick at the Wynnstay Theatricals, which he witnessed listlessly until a servant entered and gave a message. "There!" cried Roscius, "*that's* an actor!" It proved that he was a "super" hired from town. Another judge declared that in all his life he had never seen an amateur that was worth a pound a week.

A certain brother-in-law of Lord Allen was a strange being. "It was a common remark in the Club that he could not be five minutes in the room without talking about at least as many Lords, especially Lords Thanet and Lowther."

That amusing and popular being, "Tommy" Duncombe—one of the regular dandies—was a member at one time. There was a certain Westmacott, proprietor of a paper called the *Age*,

which throve upon personalities. This man was, of course, always in "hot water." Once behind the scenes at Drury Lane he came up to "Tommy" and asked him how he did. The dandy said—"I am surprised at your addressing me, sir, when you are so constantly abusing me in your paper, and I desire that when you do speak to me that you will take off your hat"—at the same time knocking off



THOMAS DUNCOMBE, M.P.

the hat. The other squared up to him, on which Tommy struck him twice in the face with his clenched fist. The manager, Captain Polehill, was very angry at the scuffle taking place behind his scenes. High words followed and there was talk of a duel. "Tommy," however, handsomely apologised. Next day at the Garrick, Planché, Mathews and others came up and publicly thanked "Tommy" for thrashing the libeller. A great friend of his was Major F——, a

man about town, and, like "Tommy," always in difficulties. He got a cheque for £40 changed at the Club which was dishonoured, and it was about three months before the money was paid. Our chronicler adds significantly, "I never saw him at the Club afterwards."

There were many managers members—the adventurous Bunn; Charles Kemble, of Covent Garden; Ben Webster, of the Adelphi; S. Arnold, of the English Opera House; Stephen Price, the American, who captured George F. Cooke and brought him off to the States; Charles J. Mathews; the pleasant Thomas Harris; and La Porte, the Frenchman.

Lord de Roos was another of the members. He unluckily became notorious for a card scandal, in consequence of which, as his friend puts it, "he got out of society." There was another case of the kind, in which a pleasant man about town and very highly connected was concerned. I recall meeting him at a dinner-party given by "Boz" at his house near the Marble Arch, and found him a most agreeable man. The late Lord A—— L—— once gave me a humorous account of the business, though it was tragic enough. His friends, believing in his innocence, pressed the delinquent to demand an investigation; but he refused, saying that it would kill his wife. "Oh," said Lord A——, bluntly, "if that's the view you take, no more is to be said, and I strongly advise you to go away at once." His wife, who was a lady of great family, was sitting surrounded by a sort of committee of great dames, comforting her. She had been told the fiction that all the distress was owing to their furniture being burned in the recent fire at the Pantechnicon! The contrast between her agonies over this trivial matter and the really serious nature of the catastrophe was almost comic. Lord de Roos was much liked and very popular. Unluckily for his memory this business, though so far off, is still remembered and often quoted as "a leading case."

Dunn—William or "Billy Dunn"—was a member. He was the treasurer of Drury Lane Theatre. He could tell many a tale of the

impecunious but ingenious Brinsley his master, who was so ready to "do" anybody or everybody. It is evidence of the superior status of the great theatres in those days, that a mere treasurer who would now be considered a clerk, should be admitted into an important first-class club. But Drury Lane was then a great institution with a vast number of persons dependent on it. It was "Billy Dunn" who used to impress this one efficacious method of making a piece "go." "First," he would say, "you must tell the audience what you are *going* to do; then that you *are* doing it; after that, that you have *done* it; and *then* they may at last begin to understand you." There was a good deal of sense in this exaggeration; as every actor knows, you must "knock it into 'em."

John Adolphus was a popular barrister and successful defender of doubtful cases at the Old Bailey. "He was a man full of anecdote but occasionally very rude, which made him, though a very eloquent, also a very unpopular member at the bar, and unquestionably prevented his rising to the highest rank in his profession." He fought duels and was also somewhat literary, having written a ponderous account of George III., a combination of Hume and Smollett, an extraordinary piece of drudging work to come from a *viveur*. He also wrote a life of Bannister, the actor. He was a leading member of the Eccentrics, a debating society that met in May's Buildings. This was a peculiar feature of the times and seems strange to us. Any one could rise and speak, and such places became a good school for ready talk. In his *Memoirs*, dictated by himself in his old age, is an extraordinary account of the various drinking societies and all-night clubs of which he had experience, with many pleasant stories.

What a dramatic career is summarised in this account, furnished by Barham, of a dissipated Scotch baronet and member of the Club! "Sir W. A., a regular scamp. Having spent every shilling he was worth while Captain A., he was at dinner on bread and cheese with half a pint of porter at the Brown Bear, a flash house in Bow Street, when he saw in the papers the sudden death of his cousin, the

young baronet who was killed by some accident while a boy at Eton. This event gave him a baronetcy and an entailed estate of several thousands a year, all of which that he could, he dissipated in less than two years, and having joined with "Tommy" Duncombe and others, in raising £40,000 by accommodation bills, received the money and ran away to France with it, leaving his friends subject



JOHN FORSTER, DICKENS'S FRIEND AND BIOGRAPHER.

to all the liabilities. He was afterwards outlawed, and his name struck off the Club list." He must have arranged matters, however, for Barham later met him at Broadstairs. He had been an actor at the Margate theatre at 16s. a week !

We find a very cruel attack on "Boz's" biographer, John Forster, whose unfortunate manner, seems to have made him hosts of enemies.

"The Beadle of the World" was Douglas Jerrold's description of him, and only those who knew the redoubtable John could understand how admirable a *sobriquet* it was. Yet a truer friend and a kinder heart it was impossible to conceive. It is clear that Barham disliked if not loathed him. He was "a low scribbler," he says, "without an atom of talent, and totally unused to the society of gentlemen. He narrowly escaped expulsion through publishing an account of a dinner at the Garrick in a newspaper to which he was a reporter. The committee wrote him a letter on the occasion, expressive of their disgust, which would have caused any other man to retire. About a year after he got drunk at the anniversary Club dinner. Tom Duncombe got drunk at the same time, but behaved so differently that Poole observed one was the real gentleman drunk, the other a 'spewrious' gentleman drunk. He became subsequently a sort of toady to Talfourd and Macready, and wrote the theatrical criticisms in the *Examiner*."

All this prejudice shows the general feeling towards Forster, who, as I said, was always treading, or trampling, on people's corns. I remember his friend Browning once declared that he was tired of Forster "always wiping his shoes on him." He was not a reporter, nor would the Club have admitted a reporter into its ranks. He was the fast friend—not toady—of Macready and Talfourd, as well as of "Boz," to the day of the latter's death, whose praise in his will, "my trusty friend John Forster," will be remembered.

Poole gave a portrait of Forster in "Little Pedlington." This may be Colonel Dominant. But though Barham calls the sketch "a life-like caricature of him," it does not seem to me that any of the characters recall Forster very accurately. The Club apparently did not much heed its members "taking off" their fellows in this fashion, which contrasts with Thackeray's odd sensitiveness in the case of Edmund Yates.

CHAPTER IV

THACKERAY



UT we now come to one who was the choicest spirit of the Club, who was during his time the Club itself—its centre, its soul, its cynosure. It was his very home, not a mere “house of call,” where he dropped in occasionally. It seemed to be for him a sort of whetting-stone for his wit; it kept his humours bright, keen, and polished. His fine large capacities filled the place. His bust, appropriately enough, stands at the top of the stair, facing that of Charles Kemble, and is a characteristic work. It has mellowed with time and lost the stare and glare of the new marble, becoming every year more human. For every one that mounts the stair, it seems to revive the memory of the great writer. He appears to be still a member of his dear old Club, and looks benevolently on his co-mates. The artist has dealt skilfully with the nose, broken as is well known in a school combat by Venables, later of the *Saturday Review*, assisted by Fanny Kemble's brother, John.

He was no mere official member, that came there occasionally to write a letter, or keep his name on the books; he belonged to it, was of it, and, as Boswell might say, was “impregnated with the Garrickian ether.” He narrowly escaped being one of the founders, for he joined in 1833, not two years after its establishment, when he was only twenty-two. For thirty years more he continued to frequent

its snug chambers, knew it in its older days in King-street, where he reigned supreme, and also in its later and more flourishing times when it had moved to its new house. At one dinner he spoke of it in an affectionate way that showed his whole heart was bound up in the place. "Do we, its happy inmates," he asked, "ever speak of it as 'The Garrick Club?' No, but as 'The G.,' the little 'G,' the dearest place in the world."

Many a letter of Thackeray's was written at the Club, and bears its device and motto, a picture of "the great globe itself," with the quotation, "All the world's a stage." Lately there was sold by auction a couple of sketches drawn with pen and ink while he was with a friend. "'A muffin man in white kid gloves,' said the Marquis. 'This is strange! Ho, servant, call me yon muffin man,'"—words written round the sketches. "These," the friend has written below, "were given to me by Thackeray himself. He drew them while he was talking to me in the morning-room of his old Club in King Street." This gives a pleasing picture of his easy ways.

One of Thackeray's well-flavoured jests was made as he was walking away from the Club with Edmund Yates, then his crony. They were passing a fish-shop—possibly the one now in Coventry Street—when they noticed that one tub of oysters was marked at a shilling, the other at one and threepence per dozen. Said Thackeray, "How the two must hate each other!" Is there not here the very quintessence of the Titmarsh humour? Here is his knowledge of character—of human nature—in little; and how original and yet how simple the form—his own true satire being thus exercised on such inanimate things.

The house of a well-known print dealer—Mr. Fawcett, of King Street—was nearly opposite the Club, and, as he has told me, he could take easy note of all the doings and goings on in these the palmy days of the old Club. Several of the members, such as Mark Lemon and Palgrave Simpson, had rooms close by, so that they might be said to have lived wholly at a club. For many the print shop had an entrancing attraction; but its steadiest frequenter was

Thackeray—Titmarsh—who could scarcely ever pass by without “dropping in.” His fancy was rather promiscuous, though he relished engravings, coloured and others, of the old English school—pictures of manners and character. Once making up a selection into a roll, he took his leave, but returned next day to ask for it. When he was told he had taken it away, “Odd,” he said, “I suppose I did so ; *but I have never seen it since.*” On another occasion he chose a series of exquisite engravings to the story *Les liaisons dangereuses*, of the French school, by Moreau or Eisen, but returned with them next day, saying he could not keep such things in his house. This is what one would expect of the genial satirist, and harmonises with his praise of Dickens in the lecture on Sterne. The best customer, however, was David Roberts, who laid out large sums on the fine engravings after the old masters—Claude, Poussin, and others. Here he was unrestricted as to price, often expending his ten or twenty pounds at a visit. It was an unlucky day for our print dealer when the Club shifted its quarters.

Some curious episodes in Thackeray’s course are associated with the “Garrick.” An allusion in “Pendennis” to Catherine Hayes, couched in rather opprobrious terms, was of course assumed by certain Irish to be pointed at the great songstress, who was then their idol. The grossness, brutality, unmanliness of the attack showed, as the native newspapers contended, the novelist’s rancorous hatred of their country. When the storm was raging the author quietly sat down at the Club, no doubt enjoying the thing, and wrote an explanatory letter to the *Morning Chronicle* (April 12, 1850), oddly headed, “Capers and Anchovies.” Only those familiar with the old memoirs could explain this allusion, which referred to a story of an Irish duel, in which one of the parties maintained that he had seen on his travels “anchovies growing on the trees.” He was politely given the lie, and when he had shot his antagonist, he called out “Oh, by the powers, I am all wrong, ’twas *capers* I meant.” On this occasion Thackeray was merely referring to a historical murderess of the same name, already described in his story of “Catherine.” It

is said that an indignant Irishman took lodgings opposite Thackeray's house, with a view of punishment, and that he had difficulty in mollifying him. My own conviction is that the author purposely introduced her name to produce this mystification, thus "laying a trap" for a class of persons whom he cordially disliked, and delighted in ridiculing. He loathed the humbugging, flourishing Irishman, whom he knew by heart, and introduced again and again. It was odd certainly that he brought in Miss O'Neil, then alive and become Lady Becher, with her whiskyfied father, as Captain Costigan and the Fotheringay.

It was also a peculiarity of Thackeray's to introduce in his books veiled but unmistakable allusions to persons at the time obnoxious to him. Thus would he have a reference to "my dear young literary friends Tom Garbage and Ben Bowstreet." This was more ingeniously contrived than Edmund Yates has put it. I have noticed many instances of it. He would make the allusion so general that it would seem to the common reader wholesale satire, but any one in the literary way would see at once what and who was intended. Yet even in this way it was skilfully done. He would bring in some name of "place," or some incident "*apropos* of boots," which would make the reader who was "in the know" say, "why, he means So-and-so." It was an odd coincidence at the least that in the height of his dispute with Yates there appeared in "The Virginians" an allusion "to young Grub-street," which Yates took to himself, and to whom it gave deep offence. So in "The Newcomes" where Doyle's portrait of F. Bayham is certainly drawn from Forster's burly figure, while the author makes the waiter speak of Lord Highgate as a "most harbitrary gent." This, of course, refers to the well-known story of Forster and the cabman. We may be certain Forster would not have relished even this veiled allusion. The author presently says, as if to "rub it in," that he walked up to Jack Straw's Castle with Kitely, this being a known haunt of Forster, and Kitely, a character that he had publicly performed. Between Thackeray and Forster there was no love lost. Indeed, intimate as I was with the latter for many years,

I never heard him mention the name save once or twice, and then not with cordiality. Forster was too autocratic to be acceptable at the Club.

Intimately connected with Thackeray was a personage whose name is scarcely known to "the general," but who had a reputation among his fellows, because he was perpetually furnishing them with entertainment on account of his grotesque ways, and the good humour and insensibility with which he accepted their constant "chaffing." Though he suggests nothing himself, he was destined to suggest a good deal to the genial writer. This was one Andrew Arcedeckne, an eccentric character and a genuine low comedian off the stage; though nothing of an actor on the boards, even as an amateur, when he sometimes appeared, only to be chaffed by a friendly audience who would throw coppers into his hat! Sir F. Burnand, in a *Pall Mall Magazine* article, has given a lively and amusing account of this odd person whom he knew well, and who told him all about his connection with Thackeray and also numerous Garrick Club reminiscences. Sir F. Burnand is able to correct the popular notion that it was Jerrold who said to Thackeray that "he ought to have had a piano" to make his lectures "go off." Arcedeckne maintained, though such assertions are not always convincing, that it was he himself who made the remark, "Ah, *Thac*, *my boy*, you ought to ha' 'ad a pianner," this being his fashion of pronunciation. "*Thac*, *my boy*!" was ever in his mouth. As has long been repeated, "*Thac*," used him as his model for the good-natured but inconsequent Foker in "*Pendennis*;" we may be sure with his consent, and even to his own delight. It was, indeed, almost a compliment—for Foker is not "half a bad fellow" and excites our interest. This freedom, as the outside world thought it, gave him a sort of privilege. And some of his speeches to "*Thac*, *my boy*," were really good. Such as his asking him what other subject he was next going to take up for his lectures, "There's plenty for you to do *Thac*, *my boy*," he said, thoughtfully; "there's the two Charles', the eight Henries, and the sixteen Gregories," &c. Better still was his speech

on seeing the novelist in the smoking-room, his back to the fire, his coat-tails spread out, "What, *Thac*, my boy, *getting inspiration*?" He would add, quite in Foker's style, "He was a short 'pudgy' little fellow. Awfully good chap, old *Thac* was. Lor' bless you, he didn't mind me a bit. But I *did* take it out of him now and again. Never gave him time for a repartee." His calling Sir F. Burnand, "*Poluphloisboio Thalusses*," on the first success of "*Black-eyed Susan*," was not very brilliant, though "fair—very fair indeed." I can fancy that the novelist was but half pleased with his rough and telling strokes. "*Pickwick*," which seems the very compendium of all possible situations, and is always suggesting something apposite to our daily life, irresistibly recalls to us *Blazes*, the Bath footman, before the fire, and Sam with his remark that "he'd save coals." *Blazes* moved away and said, "it warn't bad." *Arcedeckne's* portrait is to be seen in the billiard group on the stairs.

When *Planché* knew *Thackeray*, in the early days of the Club, he described him, to our surprise, as "a slim young man, rather taciturn and not displaying any particular love or talent for literature. Drawing appears to be his favourite amusement, and he often sat by my side while I was reading or writing, covering any scrap of paper with the most spirited sketches and amusing caricatures." He once literally *drew* an objectionable member out of the Club! This gentleman's figure was eccentric and peculiar, and the lively "*Thac*" on every pad and scattered piece of paper used to sketch him in some *derogatory* attitude, always giving a back view, which, however was perfectly recognisable. The member bore his persecution for a long time with good humour, but at last one rather too "strong" a counterfeit presentment made him withdraw.

Thackeray's unfortunate quarrel with *Edmund Yates* is a part of the history of the Club, and indeed proves how vast was the influence of the great writer. He indeed "ruled the roast" there, as he had for years done as *Titmarsh*, and later as the accepted rival of *Dickens*. It was foolish of the younger man, one of the light, "free lances of the Press," to think of disputing such a supremacy. But

the thing went far deeper, and it really grew out of the rivalry between Capulets and Montagues, so that even the humbler retainers took up the quarrel of their leaders. Titmarsh—though this is not generally known—was the first to assail, in *Frazer's Magazine* (1840), the successful "Boz" who had carried the whole town with his "Pickwick" and "Oliver Twist." He was then but an obscure and young adversary. But with the success of "Vanity Fair," some nine years later, he became a *rival*, and his friends talked seriously, not of rivalling, but of even *deposing* Dickens! In a letter recently published Thackeray tells his daughter (I think) that "there is not room for us both up in the same tree." Hence a certain acidity in their relations, which was shared by the friends of both, and caused, as I said, even such smaller fry as Yates, who was devoted to Dickens *corps et âme*, to bite their thumbs at his opponents. Mrs. Lynn Linton takes this view also.

Edmund Yates, Montagu Williams, and some others represented the type of pleasant, free-and-easy member—common in the 'fifties—whose good spirits supplied the place of wit—gay, pleasant young fellows who were "living on their wits," which were often of a brilliant sort. They were all connected with the press and the stage; wrote farces, dramas and criticisms, and were good company. The pair have written accounts of their lives, in the form of memoirs and recollections, which are most agreeable reading. Yates I knew well, all through his chequered course, as a "follower" of "Boz," which he was in the sense that Winkle and Tupman were "followers" of Mr. Pickwick. There was no more devoted admirer of, and assiduous attendant on, the great writer, who liked him—and to whom his energy and gaiety recommended him. I recollect he was of the party that went down to Liverpool, on his invitation, to see the great man off to America. An engagement prevented my going also. Yates had extraordinary versatility, and had essayed dramatic criticism, editorship, novel and essay writing, plays, in all of which he was fairly successful, but was always struggling until the fortunate day when he hit on the notion of founding *The World*.

The diligence no less than versatility of all these young men was a marvel. There was a perfect "superfætation of talent." Yates must have written, I suppose, some thirty or forty three-volume novels, besides many volumes of essays, many dramas and farces. He was all the time doing heavy journalistic work—attending the theatres—"doing" any show that required pictorial description—then writing Christmas stories, imitations of popular novelists, and all sorts of things.

There were various generations, as it were, in the course of the Club, both at the old and the new house. There was the "old school," as it might be called, the pleasant group of true humourists, Jerrold, Hook, Barham, Poole, and Titmarsh, a regular "set," who kept "all going" and gave its tone to the place. Later came the newer group, Shirley Brooks, Serjeant Ballantine, Montagu Williams, Serjeant Murphy, "Johnny Deane," F. C. Burnand, and many more. As in all such communities at the time of the dispute, there was an opposition party who resented the rule of the elder men. For many years having been connected with Edmund Yates in his various appearances on the public stage, I could tell a good deal about him. How many magazines and journals did he edit! He was of a most sanguine cast of mind, and seemed never discouraged. Apart from his power of smart writing and journalism, he had a clever instinct for what would "do" or take the town, which was shown by his successful inauguration of the "Society" paper—which at the close brought him money and ease of circumstances. He was one of the most constant of "Boz's" followers, the latter always enjoying his fresh jests and good spirits. He was indeed a very smart fellow, ever ready and full of resources. But he was made for a journalist. For many years one always looked for his "Lounger at the Clubs" in that lively paper, *The Illustrated Times*—then in the hands of a number of clever young men, who, oddly enough, came out in their full strength at Christmas-tide, when they gave pathetic stories of prodigals returned and reconciliations in the "Holy Season."

Yates will always be associated with the Club from the unlucky episode which led to his retirement from it. Few now recall the excitement and sensation which this episode caused, owing to the distinguished persons who were drawn into it. Yates has told the story in his very frank style in his memoirs, and also in a magazine called *Time*, of which he was editor (January, 1880). He says :—



EDMUND YATES.

“Let me premise by asking those who read it to remember that, at the time of my offence—the bad taste and silliness of which I have admitted from the first—I was a young man of six-and-twenty, with all the rashness, the impetuosity, the thoughtlessness, and, I daresay, the insolence of youth. Let them read the little article which was the cause of that offence, judging of it first by its own

merits and demerits, then in comparison with personalities and criticisms which have been published before and since. Let them compare it with what was said by the *convives* of the 'Noctes Ambrosianæ' of the Whig politicians and 'cockney versifiers,' among whom were Wordsworth and Coleridge, of the day; let them compare it with what was said by Dr. Maginn and his compeers in *Fraser*, of those from whose political or literary opinions they differed; above all, let them compare it with Mr. Thackeray's own description in *Fraser* of two of the most prominent *littérateurs* of that period; and let them recollect that for this offence I was not only branded for life with a social stigma, but that so strong was the clique of my opponents that it required all the kindness of my friends, and a not inconsiderable amount of dogged perseverance and constant industry on my own part, to enable me to make any way in my literary career."

"In the summer of 1858," he goes on, "the proprietor of a little weekly periodical called *Town Talk* engaged me to write in its columns. The paper contained a certain amount of 'scissored' matter; but all that was original in it was to be supplied by two contributors—the late Mr. Watts Phillips and myself. In the second week of my engagement, late one evening, I received a note from the printer, begging me to come directly to the printing-office. On arriving there I found that Mr. Watts Phillips had over-estimated the amount of 'copy' which he had furnished, and that above a column was still wanting, which it was necessary should be supplied at once. I sat down there and then and wrote the following article."

Here, under the title of "Literary Talk," he supplied a word-painting of Thackeray, describing his appearance and manner, with a short account of his career: "His face is bloodless and not particularly expressive, but remarkable for the fracture of the bridge of his nose, the result of an accident in youth . . . *his bearing cold and uninviting; his style of conversation either openly cynical or affectedly good-natured and benevolent; his bonhomie is forced; his wit biting; his pride easily touched; but his appearance is invariably that of a*

cool, well-bred gentleman." After praising some of his writings he comes to the Lectures on the English Humourists: "The prices were extravagant; the lecturer's adulation of birth and position was extravagant; the success was extravagant. No one succeeds better than Mr. Thackeray in cutting his coat according to his cloth. Here he flattered the aristocracy; but when he crossed the Atlantic George Washington became the idol of his worship; the four Georges the object of his bitterest attack. . . . There is a want of heart in all he writes."

Now even in these free days of *Truth* and the *World*, &c., when everything domestic has become public property, this would have been thought a bitter attack. But it does seem to have been dictated by a certain sense of injury or dislike.

The novelist was deeply indignant. Though no name was attached to the article, he speedily learned the author's, and it is evident was at once determined to lay his broad "paw" on him and crush him. Two days after the article appeared he despatched this letter—half angry, half scornful—to the writer:—

"36, ONSLOW SQUARE, S.W., *June 14.*

"SIR,—I have received two numbers of a little paper containing notices respecting myself, of which, as I learn from the best authority, you are the writer.

"In the first article of 'Literary Talk' you think fit to publish an incorrect account of my private dealings with my publishers.¹

"In this week's number appears a so-called 'Sketch,' containing a description of my manners, person, and conversation, and an account of my literary works, which of course you are at liberty to praise or condemn as a literary critic.

"But you state, with regard to my conversation, that it is either 'frankly cynical or affectedly benevolent and good-natured'; and of my works (lectures) that in some I showed 'an extravagant adulation

¹ "This was a paragraph in the 'scissored' matter, with which I had nothing whatever to do."

of rank and position' which in other lectures ('as I know how to cut my coat according to my cloth') became the object of my bitterest attack.

"As I understand your phrases, you impute insincerity to me when I speak good-naturedly in private ; assign dishonourable motives to me for sentiments which I have delivered in public ; and charge me with advancing statements which I have never delivered at all.

"Had your remarks been written by a person unknown to me I should have noticed them no more than other calumnies ; but as we have shaken hands more than once, and met hitherto on friendly terms (you may ask one of your employers, Mr. —, of —, whether I did not speak of you very lately in the most friendly manner), I am obliged to take notice of articles which I consider to be not offensive and unfriendly merely, but slanderous and untrue."

Could anything be more severe, more envenomed, than this crushing letter—which certainly seems to go beyond the offence given. The injury is inflamed and coloured with an art which it is impossible not to admire. Still, with such an adversary, such a reply as this was a warning. The kettle and the pot were opposed, and it is clear that the wisest course, however disagreeable, was to offer apologies and excuses and try to make the matter up. But Yates could only think of retorting that Thackeray had himself habitually indulged in personalities, and he had introduced "Foker," "Captain Shandon," and others. He drew up a letter in this sense, but Dickens dissuaded him from sending it. Yates was under the illusion that *had* it been sent the matter "would have ended there and then,"—that is, we may assume that Thackeray would have been intimidated by the *riposte*. Instead, Yates sent a short note pointing out that he declined to accept Thackeray's "angry understudy of my phrases." Thackeray's letter was as "slanderous and as untrue as he said the article was ; but for its offensive tone he would have been glad to discuss the matter and set everything right." The truth was that there was little parallel between what he had done and what he imputed to the

novelist. Thackeray indeed introduced certain friends into his stories, but disguised and idealised, although recognisable, and they did not object. This was very different from introducing an acquaintance and fellow-clubman by *name*, and describing him offensively.

Obtaining no redress, the novelist within a few days had laid the matter before the committee, with his complaint; on which Yates also addressed them, pleading that they had no jurisdiction, that the matter did not refer to the Club at all, or to anything that had occurred *there*. The article may have been in exceedingly bad taste, but then they were not a Committee of taste. The Committee, however, entered on the matter and decided that Yates must apologise or retire from the Club. He refused to do either, but appealed to a general meeting, which was accordingly called. He charged Thackeray in the interval with making the most offensive reference to him in his "Virginians," then being published. "Boz" advised his friend throughout, even as to the propriety of his appearing at the meeting, suggesting that it would give him an advantage, as the other would likely enough stay away. During the crisis there were frequent councils held, to which the sagacious Forster, Wilkie Collins—not nearly so sapient—Wills (W. H.), and the two Smiths, Albert and Arthur, "laid their heads together" and settled on the course to be pursued. It is hard to see what they could have expected in default of taking the only course open, viz., to withdraw and apologise. They must have seen that the Thackeray party was supreme.

At the meeting on June 10, Yates's case was warmly supported by Dickens, Wilkie Collins, David Roberts, Palgrave Simpson, Sam Lover, Sir James Fergusson—who returned specially from Palestine!—and others. Mr. O'Dowd moved the resolutions, which were carried by seventy to forty-six. It might almost seem that the issue was between the two leaders. But the bulk of the Club was on Thackeray's side. Yates then attempted to go to law with the Club, and tried to make a "colourable" entry, so as to suffer a friendly expulsion—another mistake; but it was found that the chances of success were not very encouraging, so legal action was abandoned.

And here the generous instincts of Dickens prompted him to interpose for his friend. He accordingly wrote to Thackeray, suggesting that he might "say six words to him at the Athenæum" by way of arbitration, and thus light on some fashion of reconciling the quarrel.

Now it must be said that in this part of the transaction Dickens—always amiable and eager to aid his friends—seemed for a moment to have forgotten his own rather delicate position as regards Thackeray before the public. It will be noted how "Boz" felt himself constrained to reveal to Thackeray that it was by his promptings, and by his advice, that his *protégé* had been guided through all the stages of the episode. "It is right that in putting this to you I should tell you that Mr. Yates brought your letter to me. He had recently done me a manly service I can never forget in some private distress of mine." He then tells him he is clear that the Club had exceeded its powers. "If this mediation can take place I shall be heartily glad to do my best in it, and God knows in no hostile spirit towards any one, least of all to you." A "quiet accommodation of the matter" was all that was wanting.

Thackeray was indignant, and wrote with some bitterness on November 26th: "I grieve to gather from your letter that you were Mr. Yates's adviser in the dispute between me and him. You say that Mr. Edwin James is strongly of opinion that the conduct of the Club is illegal. On this point I can give no sort of judgment, nor can I conceive that the Club will be frightened by the opinion of any lawyer *out of their sense of the justice and honour which ought to obtain among gentlemen.*"

This seems rather too harshly put. Further, though Dickens begged that the matter should be considered private and that both letters should be burnt, Thackeray, strangely enough, laid them before the Committee with an illusory suggestion that if they accepted Dickens's offer none would be more content than he. "Boz" deeply resented this treatment of his well-meant proposal, and here was the beginning of the estrangement which so unfortunately clouded the

latter days of their acquaintance. The impetuous Forster, who, like Podsnap, considered his denial of anything as equivalent to its non-existence, speaks of this very serious quarrel as "a trifling estrangement scarcely worth alluding to." But Yates says it was "complete and continuous." When they met they never exchanged anything beyond a casual remark. Forster himself was furious with Thackeray. "He be d——d with his," &c.

There is an admirable characteristic story of Forster which is scarcely known. In some dispute of "Boz's" with his publisher Forster of course officiated, and the faithful Wills was also present



"BOZ."

at the discussions. Between Wills and Forster, who always spoke of him as "Mr. Wills," with a stress on the "Mr.," some sort of animosity raged, and I recall "Boz" describing a scene that occurred between the pair at his office, which he had to bring to a close by requesting Wills to withdraw, which the latter did, growling, in the words of the melodrama, that "a time would come." When the publishing matter was happily arranged "Boz," ever amiable, wished to smooth away the unpleasantness between his two friends, and reported to Forster that Wills had said that this success was due to Forster, whose admirable tact and businesslike management had

brought the whole through. "I am sorry, my dear Dickens," rolled out Forster, "that I cannot reciprocate the compliments of your friend, for, in the whole course of my life, *a dammed ass I never met.*" This use of the comparative is as unusual as it is delightful.

Thackeray was not to live very long, and he and his old friend were happily reconciled in the Hall of the Athenæum Club, hard "by the coats"—(it *should* have been at the Garrick). The generous Dickens started, hesitated a moment, then put out his hand, which was eagerly seized. Dickens's own cane-bottomed chair has since come into possession of the Athenæum Club—a fit *souvenir* and reminder of the reconciliation—and is placed in the library. It was bequeathed by the late Sir William Fraser, and suggested some memorial lines¹ by myself.

It is a curious thing that Edmund Yates—whose expulsion caused such a storm—was not strictly a member of the Club at the time, for he had been admitted when below the regulation age, being under eighteen years.

No doubt Yates and his friend were technically right in contending that there was no connection between the offence and the Club, for nothing said, or done, in the Club was reproduced. But to describe a person with whom you associate in a club and set out his peculiarities, character, &c., with offensive comments, raises the presumption that these defects must have been noted in the Club. We may wonder how it was that, with every one eager to reconcile the disputants—"Boz," the Club, and "Thac" himself, in a passive way—that Yates alone stood out. I fancy there was some feeling or jealousy between the parties. For many reasons Thackeray could not

¹ In the *St. James' Gazette*—

"The writing Clubman lifts his eyes,
And sees the genial spirit rise,
Glide softly to the empty chair,
And then dissolve to thinnest air.
Thus day and night—through ev'ry rub—
'Boz' lives—a member of the Club."

have passed the matter by. The Garrick he loved—it was his own ground. Here he was “cock of the walk,” as it is called. To be flouted in this style by “a stripling” would never do. He would lose all his authority.

The dispute, as was natural, engendered a good deal of heat, partisanship, and also ridicule. There was published “The Garrick Club Dispute” in *Quiz*, a comic monthly magazine, edited by J. C. Collins, with illustrations by Leech. There was a ludicrous account of the quarrel and a burlesque scena called “the Roscius Club, or the *Virginian Nose*,” “Thac” being described as the Virginian and “Boz” as *Carlo Pickwicki*, together with a portrait of Thackeray as “the Roman Father.”

Dickens, it would appear, had withdrawn from and rejoined the Club several times. The Yates incident was a shock and seriously disturbed his loyalty to the Club, but a matter that took place later led to his final withdrawal with some of his friends. He had had for years a faithful, most useful assistant in W. H. Wills, who was his *factotum*, secretary, and “buffer,” who knew how to interpose with due tact between the great man and intruders. He was the working editor of *Household Words* and of *All The Year Round*, where he was exceedingly useful. He was, in fact, a thorough journalist, and had journalists’ methods, but was little of a writer. I always found him a true and useful friend. This assistant—who was ambitious and eager to get forward in society—wished to belong to the Garrick Club. Dickens worked heartily for him. The Yates business had not been forgotten; or possibly the Club did not relish a mere journeyman of the kind being introduced. Wills was black-balled, to the indignation of “Boz,” who with his friend, Wilkie Collins, at once withdrew from the Club. It was certainly a slight, and an unbecoming one, for Dickens held so high a position that objection ought to have vanished in presence of any wish of his.

Dickens joined the Club on January 21, 1837, “Pickwick,” then running so triumphantly, having completed just half its course. But in the following year, on November 17th, he resigned. Abou

six years later, on January 13, 1844, we find him re-elected ; but twelve years later, on June 5, 1856, he withdrew. Later, and once more, on November 21st, he rejoined the Club, only to leave it finally on May 18, 1865. No doubt he found its enjoyments incompatible with his work.



CHAPTER V

WILKIE COLLINS—CHARLES READE—BYRON



WILKIE COLLINS was for a long time the "bosom friend" of Dickens, but this friendship, it seemed to me, rather cooled off towards the end. At one time Wilkie was tempted to go out to the States to read his own works. He gave a sort of trial performance at the Olympic; I saw the stout novelist get out of a cab at the door. He gave us "The Terribly Strange Bedstead," a little story setting out how some decoyed person awaking noted the top of the bedstead descending slowly to crush him. A creepy thing, which would have required an Irving to interpret. Collins, however, blandly benevolent and in a very low tone, prattled along, telling us about "the terribly strange *bidstead*," laying a stress on the last word. It was all so conversational and tranquil that it might have been an account of his night at an hotel. As a bit of reading it was *nil*. Half the slender audience could scarcely have known what it was about. But the remarkable thing was the ineffable self-complacency, the perfect satisfaction, of the reader. It seemed incredible that with such "baggage" he should think of confronting an American audience, and it made one tremble to think what sort of reception he would meet. He did go, however, and I never heard exactly how he fared. But he returned speedily. I had to give an account of the scene

at the Olympic to my boisterous friend Forster, who now snorted indignantly, now laughed loudly. To do him justice, he was from the beginning strongly against these sort of shows, particularly in the case of Dickens. This idea was fostered or suggested by Macready's odd compliment, repeated to me by "Boz" himself, on his Bill Sikes reading: "two Macbeths by G——!" His strong line was hardly pathos, but humorous passages, such as "The Trial." What could be better than his command of comic emphasis and inflexions, which were invariably the same on every occasion, a command he secured by unwearying labour and practice. I remember him saying, "Now I must go and do my rehearsal," when he would go through the whole piece exactly as if before the public.

I think the co-partnership in the Christmas numbers with Wilkie Collins rather injured Dickens and weakened his own style.

Few think how relentless is the social law which affects the position of once successful writers, who, having for long "held the town," find out either that they have "no more to say," or that the fickle public has tired of them, or has transferred its admiration to newer and fresher objects, who in their turn will have to meet the same fate. From this change I saw three eminently popular writers suffer acutely—Wilkie Collins, Charles Reade, and Anthony Trollope. Their names to the last were good for something, but that something was very little, and was founded on the sort of pitying humanity with which an old discarded servant is regarded. Like Herr Joel, at Vauxhall, they are "still retained on the establishment in consideration of their past services." Nor indeed is this cruel fate wholly undeserved, for by this time they have come to the stage, not of writing because they have to say something, but of saying something because they are obliged to write. They are forced to give the scrapings and runnings from their old vessels; to serve up again what has been served up before.

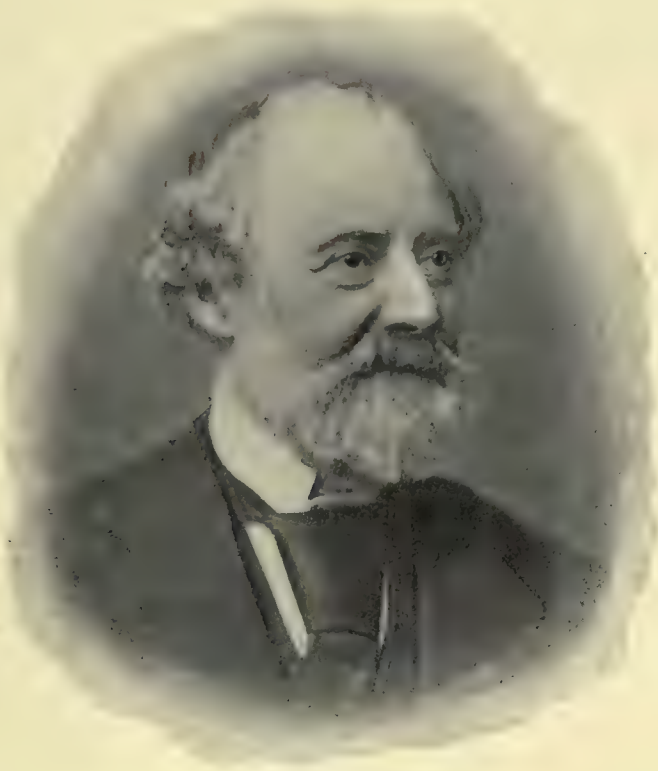
Wilkie Collins fancied that he had a gift for writing dramas, and made many ventures in this line, but he always seemed an amateur, and there was too much talk. His earliest piece, however,

"The Lighthouse," written for Dickens's famous theatricals, was an exceedingly dramatic and romantic piece of work, but a poem rather than a play. I saw it at the Olympic, with Robson in the chief part; it pleased me much, but not the public, to whom it seemed a rather "thin" production. I recall a night at the Adelphi, when a version of one of his stories called "Black and White" was produced. This was, I think, about 1869, over thirty years ago. There was a great rally of friends, and of the "set"—the *All The Year Round* set. I sat in the dress circle, and below, in an omnibus box, facing, was the whole Dickens party, the genial Charles, with his shiny glasses and flower, his daughters, and sister-in-law. It was not, however, a great success.

Another writer of mark often seen at the Club was Charles Reade. I see his tall, stalwart figure now, with his short, grizzled beard and "good" head. For so important a person he was singularly modest and retiring, speaking always in a low, gentle voice. Few men had so chequered a career or have tried so many things. He was novelist—a most successful one—dramatist—successful again—manager, collector of, and profound writer on, violins, and a vehement critic.

Reade was barely seventy when he died in 1894. When I last met him, however, he was so broken in his health and so bent that he seemed many years older. It is not common to find a popular novelist and dramatist also a fellow of Oxford, a D.C.L., and a Vice-President of his College. Not common either is it to find such a man at the Bar and a great controversialist. This many-sided man was also a musician and could play the violin—so Charles Kent assured me—with much feeling and expression, though it was often repeated, that though he could collect fiddles, he could not play on them. I have spoken of his disputatiousness: he had had innumerable suits at law to establish his rights. He was always fancying that he was being defrauded of the remuneration that was due to his talent and was ready either to go to law or rush into print with persons whom he called "Criticasters." It would be difficult to

give an idea of his vehemence in these controversies. A more agreeable feature in his nature was his overpowering natural enthusiasm in any subject which he had recently taken up and which he expected to be shared in by everybody else. At Forster's one day I sat beside him



CHARLES READE.

at dinner, and for a couple of hours he could talk of nothing but an old trial report which he was throwing into the form of a novel. I had the whole, from the stealing away of a noble youth, his being put on board a vessel, &c. It was, in fact, the well-known Annesley Case, which he fashioned into "The Wandering Heir." It was a dull

matter-of-fact story, but as a play it was interesting. As I have said, for whatever he had in hand Charles Reade was exuberantly enthusiastic; he would, like Dickens, see beauties in some very simple thing, as when he impetuously purchased from a French writer a very ordinary story, which he fashioned after his own principles. This was "White Lies," which he spoke of with raptures and which well-nigh swamped the London Journal in which it appeared. I shall not soon forget his last disastrous manifestation of enthusiasm at the Adelphi, in the shape of a piece called "Shilly Shally," which was sad stuff. Every moment you asked, can it be that clever man Reade who sets down such things? The general incoherency struck me. I was in the embarrassing position of having to write a criticism in the *Observer* which should be consistent with friendship, a difficult thing to do. One of his wild notions was that an audience loves its native airs. He accordingly assured us in his playbill that "Mr. Spillane, the talented conductor, would perform a selection of the beautiful old English airs, &c." The result was that through the night we had nothing but "The Old English Gentleman," "The Roast Beef of Old England," "The Keeper's Daughter," which threw a provincial and even pantomimical air over the whole, whilst Reade thought he was bringing about an important reform.

A stormy antagonist, he was always in "hot water," yet was a pleasant companion. He had a charming house in the old-fashioned row at Albert Gate. I remember my astonishment on once seeing painted in large capitals on the parapet of a house in the row this inscription:

NABOTH'S VINEYARD.

I knew at once from this piece of eccentricity that it must be my friend's. He had a dispute with the vestry, I think, who wished to pull down the house for widening the street, or for some other purpose. Odd to say, it excited little or no attention, probably for the reason that the passer-by did not comprehend the allusion. One of the most extraordinary things was his infatuation for a certain

mature actress, a person of ordinary talents, who, he firmly believed, was one of the greatest performers of her day, though unfairly neglected. To set her properly before the public was the object of his later attempts at management, with the additional purpose of securing a hearing for his own plays, which managers also persisted in neglecting.



JOHN OXENFORD.

All this was sad enough, especially as he was now advancing in age, and in miserable health.

Another remarkable man of striking gifts was John Oxenford. He knew many languages, translated from the Spanish, Italian, and German, and, more wonderful still, had edited Flügel's well-known dictionary—a tough job. As dramatic critic of the *Times* he always enjoyed the privilege of a private box at every theatre—a rather

invidious exception, which seemed to lay the journal under a special obligation. Here he was seen every first night with his grey head bent forward in attention and invariably attended by a faithful Irish companion whom he brought with him. It is said that he boasted that none of those whom he had censured (at the Playhouse) ever went home discouraged or despairing on account of anything he had written. Oxenford, it is known, in the evening of his days, embraced the Roman Catholic faith, even as his friend Palgrave Simpson was "reconciled" some time before his death. Since John Oxenford's death the *Times* critiques have been in the hands of smaller persons of various degrees. Oxenford was a dramatist of great skill, poet, critic, and story-teller. These were varied gifts.

Anthony Trollope was somewhat recalled by the late Sir Walter Besant, of our day. He had an outspoken manner, but was good-natured and friendly, like many a novelist who has enjoyed extravagant success, and at one time there was no one so much read by "polite society," for his lively sketches of social types, such as bishops, deans, and fashionable ladies. He had to undergo the mortifying process of being gradually let down, and of falling into neglect. However, he had made hay, and saved it too, while the sun was shining, and no one had such profitable contracts with the United States and the Colonies. He was my sponsor at the Club, and took much trouble about me. He was good enough to say that I was "safe." He had another "candidate," and added, "I wish I was half as secure about him." Mr. Garnett has described him very accurately, "In form Trollope was burly, in manner boisterous. His vociferous roughness repelled many, but was the disguise of real tenderness of heart." He also speaks of his "frank but aggressive cordiality." This manner of his always struck me as being somewhat affected, assumed to hide either shyness or a certain feeling of not being at his ease.

In Ireland, as I know, he was always remembered with pleasure, principally for his sporting tastes. He would pick up some little

animal for a song, one that was full of work, and generally contrived to have a day's hunting with this useful animal at very small cost. He was a great diner out, and agreeable talker. He loved the good things of life. He had a large head and forehead, with a large blonde beard. This, with his glittering spectacles, made him look like a professor or a benevolent doctor.



GILBERT A'BECKETT.

Gilbert Abbott A'Beckett, set down in the books as "a comic writer," was really a clever humourist of many gifts. He forecasted *Punch* in the *Figaro in London*, and, in fact, was a thorough journalist. He was one of the first to supply those shrewd notes and comments on passing events which have since become so popular; which, from being "hacked to death," have become so dull. Such chroniclers

seem to have nothing to tell save what may be considered the smallest of small beer. Now Shirley Brooks, and Peter Cunningham, and Sala, in the *Illustrated London News*, really observed and picked up many an "unconsidered trifle" and curious thing. A'Beckett called himself "the perambulating philosopher." He was also a leader writer, and on one occasion, owing to a failure of other assistance, he actually wrote *all* the leaders in the *Times* of one day—a wonderful feat. He was a barrister, and a dramatist of a very industrious kind, having written some fifty or sixty plays. He was paid the compliment by Dickens of being asked to dramatise "The Chimes," to save it from less scrupulous handlers. When only thirty-eight he became a magistrate, and filled the office with extraordinary ability and popularity, gaining the regard and esteem of all he had to deal with. He will be, perhaps, best recollected by his "Comic Histories" of Rome, England, &c., which, when they came out, were exceedingly amusing burlesques, but, in a substantial volume, are hard reading enough. But Leech's coloured pictures are most diverting. This, by the way, was a curious artistic adornment long since vanished—that of tinting etchings in vivid colours. It was, of course, done by hand, and would only serve for a limited circulation. A'Beckett was little over forty when he died. He left several sons, who have followed journalism. Mr. Arthur A'Beckett has shown the same versatility as his father, being a novelist, dramatist, memoir writer, essayist, and long filled the important office of sub-editor of *Punch*. It was in 1831 that *Figaro in London* was started, which has been spoken of as a sort of prehistoric *Punch*. Booksellers are fond of repeating that Charles Dickens wrote many of the "pars," but no proof has ever been given of this statement. Still, it is likely enough.

One of the last of the line of Hook, Poole, and Co. was the buoyant H. J. Byron, whose portrait we miss here. This irrepressible jester was as good-natured as he was witty. His lively puns have a flavour of their own. His comedies—a long series—are full of spirit and "go," and offer regular characters, eccentric or amusing, of the old pattern. It may strike few nowadays what a change has come

about in this respect, the average popular comedy being now supported by talk, and very dull talk too, though it attempts to be smart, while a number of persons—Dukes, “Lord This,” and “Lady Muriel That”—promenade, or sit on sofas in richly furnished drawing-rooms. In what a different style was “Our Boys,” with its immortal Buttermann—David James, rather—the “Hundred Thousand Pounds,” and other things. We lament the loss of this low comedy element and stirring story. Yet no one seems to miss them. The low comedy actor himself has “gone out” with the pieces.

H. J. Byron, again, was another of the extraordinary versatile men who appeared in these far-off days, the race of which seems to be extinct. He was a writer of farcical comedies and extravaganzas, also of novels. He was, besides, a humorous actor of considerable tact and experience, ever producing good effects. He was, moreover, a colloquial wit of the first class, always ready with something fresh and amusing. There is the oft-quoted story of the sawing sound that was heard behind the scenes on a first performance—a fair specimen of his style—“perhaps they are cutting out the third act.” His acting was the result of a sudden wish to add to his profits, and make a livelihood, and it had this peculiar attraction, that he specially wrote for himself the dramas in which he performed. Such were “Sir Simon Simple”—in which he played a drawling fool who was more shrewd than he appeared—and “The Crushed Tragedian.” I confess I found an attraction in his peculiarly dry style, and often went to see him in the same piece. He was a good-natured man. I have several of his letters, and most interesting they are. Certainly the old burlesque of these literary men—of the Talfourds, Brothers Brough, Byrons, Burnands, Albert Smiths—was an altogether different thing from the modern meaningless, vapid show-pieces—enlarged “Punch and Judys”—where there is little more than songs, dresses, “kick-up,” and general buffoonery. In the old pieces almost every second line or so had to contain some twist, or something funny, while puns were to be in profusion; such as “fine day for the Mediterranean, but a change has *made it a rainy 'un.*” The classical story chosen had to

be dealt with and caricatured with some skill. It is fair, however, to say of the modern piece that literary work is not wanted, or is assumed not to be wanted, by audiences. All that is asked for is pretty dresses and faces, pretty tunes ; the "cackle" doesn't matter. Who will forget "The Field of the Cloth of Gold" at the Strand, with David James, that worthy Jew, as the French King, and Fenton, who painted the scenes, as "'Enery" ? What fun the pair kept up between 'em. The laugh in those times seemed to have a much heartier ring, because more intellectual than it is now.

The Bancrofts knew H. J. Byron well, and in their lively memoirs have preserved many of his pleasant quips, such as that on his failure in managing a Liverpool theatre. "Suffering from the liver ?" said a friend. "No, from Liver-pool." "You should try cod-liver oil." "No, but I've tried Theatre r-oilal." The "so much for booking 'em" is well known. It was said originally of Mrs. Bancroft's success at her little theatre. In his last illness some one sent him a very large hare. "He never saw such a creature," he said. He really fancied that "Kendal must be inside of it," alluding to the joint management. This is really capital.

Another change in the times that strikes one is the long series of pieces that a single author—such as Byron—could produce one after the other, and at but short intervals. There seemed to be a perpetual bustle. But now a dramatic writer of the same or greater rank, such as Mr. Pinero, can only come forward after three or four years, for which the long "runs" now found necessary are accountable.

Of this jovial company—half dramatists, half novelists, and wholly agreeable—were the Brothers Mayhew—Augustus, Henry, and Horace. The latter was the weakest of the trio, but it was astonishing what varied and what popular work they turned out, separately or in concert. Who does not—rather, did not—know "The Greatest Plague in Life," "The Finest Girl in Bloomsbury," the work of Augustus ; "The Wandering Minstrel," "The Image of His Father," "London Labour and London Poor," by Henry ; and

"The Letters Left at a Pastrycook's," by Horace? Henry, it is claimed, was one of the originators of *Punch*.

The story of the stage, indeed, offers as much that is tragic and romantic, as is quaint and comic. It is, indeed, a "picaresque" thing. Almost forgotten now is the untimely fate of that interesting player, Walter Montgomery, who was ever grasping at, and nearing, a success which seemed as constantly to elude him. He had married, and two days later the town was shocked to hear that he had shot himself at his rooms at Stafford Street. Mr. Bancroft was talking to him in the smoking-room only a short time before, when he spoke pleasantly and hopefully.

One of the quaintest and most original of the lively Charles Mathews' jests was his speech at the farewell dinner given to him in 1870, when he himself took the chair! He said, "I venture to assert, and I think I may do so without vanity, that a fitter man to propose the health of our guest could not be found, for I venture to assert, emphatically to affirm, that there is no man so well acquainted with the merits and demerits of that individual as I am. I have been on the most intimate terms with him from my youth. I have watched over and assisted his progress from childhood upwards, have shared in all his joys and griefs, and I assert boldly I am proud to have this opportunity of publicly declaring that there is not a man on earth for whom I entertain so sincere a regard and affection." This is delightful fooling. I always relish his answer to the candidate dramatist who complained that he never could get his pieces back, though he regularly enclosed postage stamps. Mathews wound up a sort of buffooning justification with, "But, my dear friend, continue to send on the postage stamps. *They are always useful.*"

Another witty member was George Raymond, an actor, whose real name was Pryce Gordon, and who has left some most entertaining memoirs, written with much spirit and observation, and full of curious particulars of remarkable people. This Raymond must have been a man of singular talent and buoyancy; he had an extraordinary career of hard struggle and adventure. He is most noted, however,

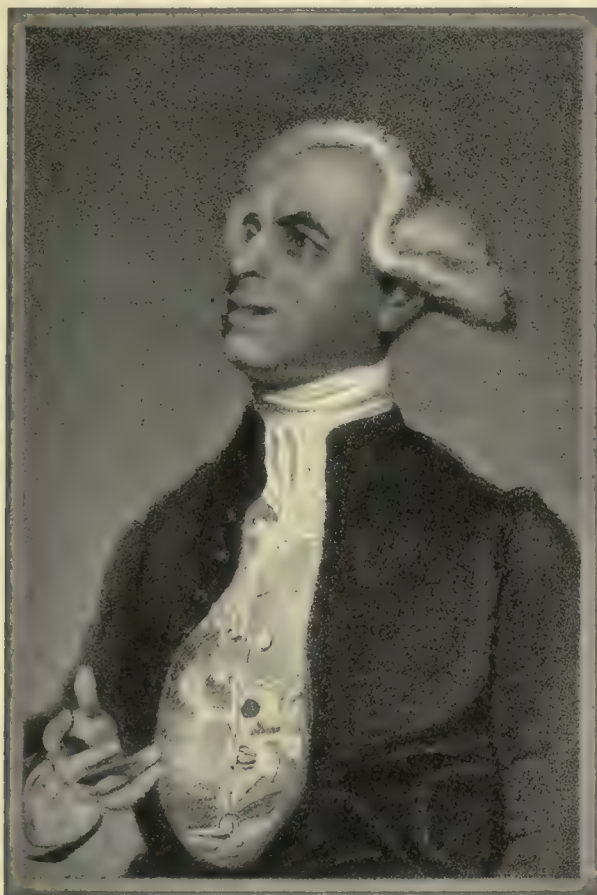
for his connection with the eccentric Elliston, whose mysterious, volatile, extravagant nature he interpreted with an acuteness and relish second only to that of Elia. There are few more amusing books than that of his *Life of the comedian*, which is written in a style of jollity and grave appreciative sympathy that shows no



G. RAYMOND.

mean power. The original edition, with its fine Cruikshank plates, is extraordinarily scarce ; so is the small reprint, and I recollect vainly entreating the late Edmund Routledge to reissue it. The beautifully engraved and intellectual portrait of Elliston is after the original by Harlowe in possession of the club. I myself possess a very spirited little portrait of that odd being his biographer.

One of the most respectable and respected members of his profession was Fawcett, who held a position much resembling that of the



FAWCETT.

late esteemed and valued Henry Howe, the "Old Howe" of the Lyceum. Fawcett was a sound and excellent actor, having a firm hold of the old Garrick traditions, and being himself one of what

was called the "Garrick School"—*i.e.*, a pupil of that eminent man. Fawcett in those days was best known as treasurer of the Theatrical Fund, at whose dinners he always appeared supporting the worthy Duke of Sussex, also a member of the Club and a constant chairman. He had often to keep this royal patron straight, in some of his rambling speeches. As when, recalling the memory of some defunct patrons of the Fund, he kept inviting the company to drink their good health and long life, while Fawcett despairingly whispered, "Dead, your Grace, they're dead!"

This may not be the correct form of the story, and it may have been a toast to some living person, whose "memory" the duke gave.

A regular series of artistic likenesses was published in *Fraser's Magazine*, in 1830-38, under the title of "A Gallery of Illustrious Literary Men." These sketches were of singular spirit, though merely outlined. Many of the originals were in John Forster's possession and can now be seen in his library at South Kensington. The delicacy of touch is surprising, and may be contrasted with the blurred and blackened lines of the modern reissue, which convey scarcely any idea of the originals. This series comprises a great many of the Garrick folk and many more who belonged to the set. It is indeed a very representative gathering of the literary men about town, and all have a certain *camaraderie* with one another and are of the same "kidney." The celebrated or notorious Dr. Maginn furnished the descriptions, which are well spiced after his usual fashion, he contriving to say or suggest as much as possible of what might be unacceptable to his subject. Several editions of this collection have been issued and in different forms. Mr. Bates edited it for Messrs. Chatto, and to Maginn's preface remarks on each subject added an amount of curious detail, couched in a somewhat homely style, which contrasts with the rather dashing and sarcastic vein of the redoubtable doctor.

Caricatured portraits of well-known men have always been in favour, but has always been far more successfully attempted in past

days than at present. Now a coarse exaggeration obtains, save in a few instances. We have only to look at the "back" numbers of *Vanity Fair* to see how far-fetched and unreal the figures are. Mr. Gould alone shows restraint, as in his admirable and renowned likenesses of Mr. Chamberlain in every attitude and situation. "H. B.'s" likenesses were intended seriously.

One of the original members was Lord William Lennox, a very voluminous writer for a lord, and who had seen a vast deal of the world in general and of town life in particular. One of my earliest recollections as a child is of that fair and captivating songstress, Mrs. Woods, in, I think, "The Jewess," and to whom Lord William had been married. I recall the general astonishment when it was known that his lordship stood in the box-office and carefully looked after the "takings" the Diva brought to the theatre. With her was the great tenor, "Mr. Templeton"—a delightful singer—and Mr. Philips, I think, as basso. How delightful he was in the "Somnambula"—as the officer in his flat cap and frogged undress uniform—singing, "As I Viewed those Scenes so Charming"! Being taken to France not long afterwards—this was in the 'forties—judge of my delight on entering the cathedral at Havre the very morning of our arrival—it was a hot Sunday—a full military band struck up this enchanting tune. Only the other day I was once more in Havre—after that long *entreacte* of sixty years—and walked straight to the very corner of the church where I was then seated. I heard once more in my mind's ear the welcome strain.

I have repeatedly noted the versatility of the clever men of this time, who seemed to do innumerable things and did them all well. Which of them, however, could excel one genius who excelled in all these things? He was a novelist, only third in success to Dickens and Thackeray, and a novelist of many styles. He was a dramatist of wonderful popularity (two of his pieces still keep the stage); a poet, a satirist, a brilliant speaker, a minister of the Crown, a talker, a dandy. This was Sir E. Bulwer-Lytton, a truly extraordinary man. I knew him well; rather, he was good enough to know me.

Here also was Percy Boyd, a *littérateur* of much refinement, one of the nameless sons of the Press, but who was an interesting figure. He led a free but not easy life, one of sad struggle to keep up a gentlemanly appearance, but which ended tragically. I remember



SIR E. BULWER-LYTTON, AUTHOR OF "PELHAM."

meeting him at Wiesbaden in the 'sixties, and was astonished to see him striving to repair his fortunes on the green table. He was pleasant, cultivated, and had the art of attracting friends. He returned to renew his struggles, and his name soon vanished from the Club list. I then lost sight of him altogether, until one morning

I read of an inquest held upon a Percy Boyd at a common fourpenny lodging-house, where he seems to have died of sad privation and lack of comforts. He had, however, deliberately taken up this abode in preference to a life of begging or "cadging." In his pocket was found a touching letter from a friend, a man about town, sending him some assistance; but imploring, if he found himself *au bout* at any time, not to hesitate to apply to him. Such was the end of this refined and interesting man, a poet and scholar.

There is a W. Ayrton in the original list, and I assume he must have been the Ayrton that was Charles Lamb's friend. It was odd, by the way, that Elia himself was not invited to join. But his "ways" would hardly have suited the place—and perhaps also his slender purse. Poor Elia! I remember Forster turning over his old letters to him—one beginning, "My dear Foorster,"—and the tears coming into his eyes as he said affectionately, "Poor, dear Charles Lamb!"

How names once familiar enough fade away and die out! Sir Cusack Roney (erst Rooney, I suppose), to whom of this generation does that suggest anything? Yet he was a cheerful, humorous Irishman, known everywhere in the railway world, when "opening up traffic" was thought a wonderful thing. He got up exhibitions, worked the industries, and was *bon camarade*. One of Dickens' sisters, by the way, married a Roney.

Here we find Sir H. Bishop, a genuine English composer (who will forget his "Chough and Crow" and his charming concerted music!). He was more popular in his day with his innumerable glees and singable things than are our men with their very excellent music, but which has no distinct style. It always seems a sort of Olla Podrida of the French and German. Bishop had a regular style of his own, thoroughly English, though he superinduced some of the Spohr harmonies. The present vulgar notion of supplying an English tune to music is to work in "The Roast Beef of Old England" measure, with a sort of jovial lilt, which is truly odious. Indeed,

in the Garrick's two opening years musicians abounded in the Club.

Another of the earlier members was that extraordinary character Bunn—"Poet Bunn," as he was derisively called—who will ever be associated with a famous song. Balfe's air will last about as long as "Home, Sweet Home"; but the verses of this air, "When Other Lips and Other Hearts," are so absurd that they might seem to have been written as a burlesque. One line used to cause great merriment, "*When hollow hearts shall wear a mask.*" Bunn had a strange life. He was at one time manager of the two great theatres, both of which he "worked" together in singular fashion—the performers, in their dresses, "scurrying through the night from one house to the other." His tyranny—or supposed tyranny—over Macready, who at last struck him in his own theatre, brought him many enemies. He delighted in calling himself "the Napoleon of the drama." *Punch* was never tired of ridiculing him. It was as astonishing that such a man got into the Club at all as that he was not speedily driven out of it. In the memoirs he gives a very venomous account of the place, which he styles "a theatrical gossiping society on a scale of greater magnitude than any that had hitherto been opened." This was in January, 1832. He pronounces it to have been one of the most detrimental institutions to the best interests of the drama, and complained that it could not influence the stage, unless it had influential members and was kept select. "The familiarity by some of the lower class players and the professional slang in which they are wont to indulge drove away some noble patrons. The Club has degenerated into a sort of junior law club. At its tables congregate some of the *soi-disant* critics of the day, who gather together what little dramatic intelligence they deal in from the gabble and, very frequently, from the hoaxing of some waggish bystanders. There are one or two solons who bring an account to the nightly gadders herein assembled of the presumed receipts for that evening of every theatre. The daily object of its visitors is to listen to the *caucus* of the place. There is, to be sure, an annual dinner on April 23rd, to commemorate him who needs no

commemoration, rendered famous by the extraneous contribution of a self-important critic to the pocket of a self-important dramatist, both supposed to be Shakespearean spirits. But what good does this do



MACREADY.

to the drama? '*Divil a ha'put!*' as one of the Irish members is occasionally apt to exclaim."

This amusing burst of spleen points at Forster and Macready: and he elsewhere cannot conceal his rage as he describes how the

burly Forster would stride past him in his own theatre, making his way to Macready's dressing-room. Forster was passionately devoted to the actor and "cried him up," while Talfourd wrote for him. Hence this pleasant jest was circulated, the work of Jerrold: "An important meeting on the subject of the legitimate drama was held last week at the chambers of Mr. John Forster, that gentleman being in the chair. Present: Sir Edward Bulwer and Mr. Macready. After a brief but highly interesting discussion it was proposed, seconded, and carried unanimously: (1) That the legitimate drama should be written by Sir Edward Bulwer. (2) That Mr. Macready should act it. And (3) That it should be supported by the powerful pen of Mr. John Forster." I have a suspicion that Bunn had to withdraw from this club much as Sir John Hawkins had to leave the Literary Club. He seems to have been a personage that was always "in hot water" with some one or other. His abuse of the institution in his book obliged his publisher—Bentley, also a member—to supply a corrective note that he did not share Bunn's opinions.

Bunn's hatred of Macready and of Macready's henchman, Forster, was extraordinary. The latter he describes as a "butcher's cur"—an insinuation as to Forster's parentage, which, it is said, was quite unfounded. As a manager he had extraordinary abilities. His name will always be linked with the unapproachable Malibran, whose portrait is here, and with England's solitary opera, "The Bohemian Girl." I say one opera—Ireland's, rather—because it was the only one that went round the world. How well I recall the genuine enjoyment this music furnished! Even now, hackneyed as it has become after nigh seventy years' "audition," it still pleases, there is something so freshly melodious. Yes, the gay and tuneful N. W. Balfe is our one composer.

In the last century and in the present there was a certain John Nixon, a well-to-do personage, an artist with a passion for the stage and for actors. He had a useful habit of pasting into a volume anything that was associated with his hobby—bills, letters, hasty thumb-nail sketches—anything, in short, that interested him. The

result was two bulky volumes, which some years ago came into the possession of the Club. The most interesting things are some play-bills, which I believe are unique, and possibly the oldest, or some of the oldest, in existence.

The late John Payne Collier, who was somehow associated with all sorts of dubious documents, and whose well-known annotated folio Shakespeare—the “Correctors’ Folio”—caused such discussion, “dis-



J. P. COLLIER.

covered” a play-bill of the time of Charles II., of which he printed a copy, but I doubt if any one has seen the original. In these Nixon volumes are two curios of extraordinary interest. One is a sort of poster, with the royal arms finely displayed and the characters set out; announcing a performance at the King’s Theatre in the Hay-market dated 1704. The other is a small bill, printed in very rude characters, dated about 1719.

The playbill, of whatever age or time, is ever interesting and

romantic. Who can forget Elia's description of "the casual sight of an old playbill," and the misty but enchanting visions it called up? The playbill tells the whole story of the stage, and of the changes in the theatre, and its arrangements. It was from this material that the worthy Geneste—the Bath parson—drudged or dredged his prodigious and laborious history. I believe I have the largest collection of playbills in the kingdom, numbering I suppose some fourteen thousand or so. But here is this unique bill :—

Acted but once these seven years.

BY HIS MAJESTY'S COMPANY OF COMEDIANS

At the

THEATRE ROYAL, IN DRURY LANE,

THIS PRESENT TUESDAY, BEING THE 17 DAY OF JULY,

Will be reviv'd

A Comedy call'd

THE COUNTRY WIT ;

OR,

SIR MANNERLY SHALLOW.

Written by Mr. CROWN, Author of "Sir Courtly Nice."

Sir Mannerly Shallow by Mr. Miller.

Sir Norman Rash by Mr. Norris.

Tom Rash by Mr. Johnson.

Ramble	} by {	Mr. Mills.	} by {	Mrs. Garner.	
Harry		Mr. Will Wilks.		Frisk	Mrs. Baker.
Booby		Mr. Leigh.		Isabella	
Constable		Mr. Cross.			

Lady Faddle by Mrs. Hunt.

Christina by Mrs. Horton.

Dame Rash by Mrs. Willis.

*With singing by Mr. Turner. And a New Entertainment of
Dancing by Monsieur Beval, Mr. Prince,
and Mr. Birkhead.*

By His Majesty's command. No persons are to be permitted behind the scenes. Nor any money to be returned after the curtain has been drawn up.

Vivat Rex.

Sir John Soane, R.A., was a distinguished architect who has left

his mark on the metropolis. He had a special style of his own which is recognisable, and certainly an interesting one—witness the Bank of England and portions of the Treasury buildings. His museum in Lincoln's Inn Fields is a most curious miscellany, and should be



ALDERMAN SIR WM. CURTIS.

more visited than it is. His son, George Soane, was a dramatist or melodramatist of some success, but was engaged in an incessant struggle with his father, who was relentless. The son took the public into his confidence by means of a pamphlet, in which he rehearsed all

his wrongs. Sir John had quite a number of these conflicts on his hands, and we may feel some surprise as to how he came to be admitted. One of the most extraordinary is associated with his portrait for which he sat to a popular artist, and presented to a learned Society. Being persuaded that the likeness was a failure or a caricature, he tried to get it back ; but failing, his friend Jerdan went and slashed it to pieces ! This incident is alluded to in "Pickwick."¹ I remember well reading with surprise this pamphlet of the son's, and his dreadful impeachment of his sire. I prepared a paper on the subject, which I showed to Dickens. He started in horror. "I dare not touch it," he said.

It causes a quaint sensation to come upon the name of Sir William Curtis, a personage that seems so very far off, being grotesquely associated with George the Fourth's visit to Edinburgh. And yet the King had only died the year before the Club was founded. When his Majesty displayed his portly figure bursting out of the full Highland dress, there was a good deal of amusement, which was heightened when Sir W. Curtis, in his effusive loyalty, presented a replica of this costume, he having no title whatever, either by birth or otherwise, to appear in the garb ! Many were the ribald jests on the occasion. But how came he here ? *Que diable fait il, &c ?*

The existing generation will hardly recall the name of Frank Talfourd, the lively son of a clever father. His talent, dramatic as it was, took quite another "twist" ; he was one of the first to introduce what was called the "Strand Burlesque." The style and ingenious turn offered by these things is shown by their titles, such as : "Alcestis, the original strong-minded woman," brought out as early as 1850 ; "Tell, or the Strike of the Cantons" ; "Shylock, or the Merchant of Venice preserved"—in which Robson made a deep tragic impression—and "Electra in a new Electric Light." I recall that these pieces did not give much pleasure—too much depended on

¹ "In return for which Mr. Pickwick caused a portrait of himself to be painted and hung up in the Club room ; which portrait, by the by, he did *not* wish to have destroyed, when he grew a few years older."—CHAP. xi.

the word-twisting. There was a lack of humorous business, though there was plenty of punning and funning. He was not nearly as amusing as Byron.

Richard Jones, who died in 1851, had a curious theatrical career, that began in the past century. The period of the fifties would



RICHARD JONES.

assuredly have been the time to gather up a vast amount of recollections, descriptions, &c., of notable people who lived at the end of the previous century or at the beginning of the last. Then was the moment to talk to people whose fathers had seen or known Garrick and Dr. Johnson, &c. Thus had Jones known Frederick Reynolds, Dibdin, and many more. He had to fight his way on the stage, and

succeeded. His merit, such as it is, was that he was the best dressed actor on the stage, and was gentlemanly in his manner. He gave lessons on elocution. This is not much "baggage," yet various accounts, memoirs, &c., have appeared of him. His translation of the title of Herold's Opera, "*Le Prè aux Clercs*," was truly witty, "*Parson's green*."

Beazley the architect was another of the choice set, full of fun, wit, and frolic. His epitaph is a droll one :

"Here lies Sam Beazley,
Who lived well and died easily."

The present, or, alas ! late, Lyceum Theatre is his design—a beautiful and even elegant construction—full of state and grace ; but, owing to the necessities of management, it had been altered and "pulled to pieces," to gain accommodation. The charming entrance hall, with its cupola, all but disappeared, with the circular auditorium ; and also the elegant double columns and Cupid tablets. The imposing proscenium, which lent such a dignity to the pieces, remained. These decorations, with others, belonged to the old Vestris days. Many years ago when Sir H. Irving was remodelling the theatre, an invasion was made by the energetic Bram Stoker, into the "Cellarage" vaults and other subterranean regions, whence tons of decaying rubbish were excavated, including a vast quantity of decayed peacocks' feathers which had been used by the manageress for adorning her boxes ! Beazley was a cheerful creature : a most accomplished man and artist, and had many other gifts. He was the life and soul of the Club, and his friend Barham gave an extraordinary account of him : "One of the most good-humoured, lively companions in the world. He was the only bearable punster I ever knew, except Peake." There is much truth here, for the common punster is *not* bearable. This presents a pleasant notion of the man, but behind the scenery, especially in the case of these agreeable jovial souls, how much that is tragic lurks ; for Barham goes on to tell, as though it were an ordinary thing, that "*both* his marriages were unfortunate." From his first wife

he was separated by a Scotch divorce, though there were doubts as to the legality of the proceedings. He afterwards "ran away" with a girl who was "the natural daughter" of a magistrate—an unexpected proceeding, as it might be thought ladies thus born would be bestowed cheerfully. She, however, ran away from *him*, to her father, and then procured a divorce. She ran away a second time with a young fellow. "I met her once," says Barham, "with Beazley, at Hawes', when I never saw a man more attentive to his wife, but the lady seemed to receive it all most ungraciously. To finish his adventures, he went up in the Royal Balloon in 1837."

Where in a club now could we meet so brilliant a judge as Talfourd, who was not only a successful advocate, a successful M.P. and law reformer, but a poet, a dramatic critic of the first rank, and a fine dramatist whose "*Ion*" was created by Macready. He was to die in harness on the bench. Where, too, shall we nowadays find such ready wit as was engendered within these club walls: as was said of Horace Twiss' daughter, who married Bacon, the editor of the *Times*, and after his death his assistant Délane: "She took the *Times* and supplement."

CHAPTER VI

MANAGERS AND EDITORS



AS we have seen, the Club was well stocked with managers. The post of manager was at the time—that is, some seventy years ago—quite an aristocratic office, which is natural when we think of the circumstances; for then there were the great Patent theatres—vast national houses, each with an enormous staff, and each having a sort of monopoly. These institutions had to be governed and administered on a liberal scale and the directors were very important people. Now, when any one or any company can open a theatre as they might a place of business, the director cannot have the old dignity. The present race are, of course, exceptionally clever and cultivated men—notably the “Actor-Managers”; but to be governor-general of such vast establishments as Covent Garden and Drury Lane were then, required a different order of talent. Management is indeed an extraordinary gift, or instinct rather, as rare as it is precious. Such persons, however, always formed an agreeable and interesting element of society; they had seen so much of life and met so many men; they knew human nature and character by heart—with all its meaner corners and “anfractuosities.” They were skilled too in all the tricks of diplomacy. Above all, the real manager must have that wonderful gift of knowing what the public likes, or can be made

to like. In the Garrick were many—such as William Abbott of Covent Garden—"a remarkably pleasant and good-humoured man" as his friend Barham describes him—"married to a sister of Mr. Kennet's of Dover, with whom he had some money, but lost the greater part of it in a theatrical speculation as manager of the Dublin Theatre. On his afterwards going to France, I, having previously



SAMUEL ARNOLD.

met him at Lord William Lennox's, gave him a letter to Galignani, through whom he became manager of the English company at Paris. He afterwards returned to England and took the Victoria Theatre, failed, and again left England." An epitome of the "ups and downs" of the manager-course. There is naturally a gambling element in this taking of theatres, as often the only capital is the "wits" of a Lessee.

The Dublin Theatre with which he was associated was the Old Theatre Royal—a noble spacious structure, second only to Drury Lane and built by the same architect. The stage and proscenium were lofty and magnificent. It was unhappily burnt many years ago—taking fire in the middle of the day during a pantomime run. Abbott was, I think, the first manager, and opened it. There are some amusing scenes related by the elder Mathews connected with “this remarkably pleasant and good-natured man.”

The Arnolds—like the Harris’—were a regular family of managers, father succeeding son. One was lessee of the English Opera House, later the Lyceum, and a shrewd man of business. Mrs. Mathews had left a sad account of his treatment of her husband, who, she insists, was decoyed into an agreement, the purport of which he did not understand, and the result of which was to make him for a number of years a sort of bond-slave, when he had to coin money, as it is called, for his task-maker, on a pittance. This is a serious charge, but I have gone carefully into the whole question, and can say, conscientiously, that there is little foundation for it. No doubt, the profits were much greater than Mathews dreamed of, but it was a fair agreement, and he understood perfectly what he was to receive. The sort of “Corney Grain” entertainment that Mathews was to supply was an experiment, and might not have answered at all, and in that case Arnold would have been bound to Mathews. It was, in fact, the common case in the profession, of the performer at a fixed salary unexpectedly bringing large gains to the managerial treasury, a situation which always gives rise to grumbling and discontent. The judicious manager will, if he be prudent, revise the terms. As it happened, Arnold eventually released Mathews. The present Mr. Arnold, so long Sir Henry Irving’s landlord, is of this family, and the actor has often taken occasion to acknowledge the liberal treatment he has received from him. On the other hand, there have been few such improving tenants, and the great success and vogue of the performances must have doubled the value of the property.

Barham’s account of Sam Arnold is curious. “I saw him,” he

says, "the morning after his theatre (the English Opera House) was burnt down by which he lost £60,000, and never saw a man meet misfortune with so much equanimity." His new theatre completely failed. When Osbaldiston took Covent Garden Theatre in 1835 and reduced the prices to 4s. for the boxes, Arnold reduced his to 2s. But this did not succeed and only injured the property. He was a member of the Beefsteak Club where he was called the Bishop, and used to say a mock but not profane grace in a large white mitre. "He was called Sambo. Latterly he took to drinking spirits and water to excess. He was on the committee from the first, but had to live abroad from 'the deranged' state of his affairs." In these early days we find an officer, Captain Polhill, also a member of Parliament like Sheridan, conducting theatres.

The jocund Keeley, with his bland, full-moon face, was a steady, daily frequenter of the place, playing his "rubber of whist" every afternoon. "Bob" was a blunt, thick-skinned creature, and said out whatever occurred to him. His son-in-law, Montagu Williams, tells one very characteristic incident which a popular peer may recall. At one of these whist parties, Keeley rather tetchily asked the peer the usual question, why he had not played the spade, club, heart, &c. To which the other replied, also as usual, that it had not seemed good to him: "he didn't think it was the game." "Well then," said Bob bluntly, "you are a fool," and shuffled off home. His listeners were rather astonished, but laughed at Bob's ways. In a day or two the peer was in the hall, when a cab drove up with Keeley in it, whom he presently heard tapping noisely with his stick on the tiles. "Hi, hi!" he called out, and the other complacently turned back, for the expected excuses. "I have been thinking," said Bob, "over that little affair of the spade, and I find that I was right; you *are* a fool." Once playing with a Jew, he was cautioned not to say anything disagreeable. The subject of marriage with Jews coming up, the Jew said he was opposed to them, as Jews would become absorbed and gradually grow extinct. "And a d——d good job!" said Keeley.

Of John Pritt Harley, who died in 1858, one always thinks with

interest and pleasure, as being associated with "Boz's" early Pickwickian triumph. We find him figuring in the young author's three dramas, which had really much success at St. James's Theatre ; Harley bearing the burden on his shoulders. There is a coloured lithograph of him as "The Strange Gentleman." He even, for his benefit, brought on a Pickwickian medley : the whole entertainment being filled by "Boz's" pieces, the opera of "The Village Coquettes," the "Is She His Wife,"

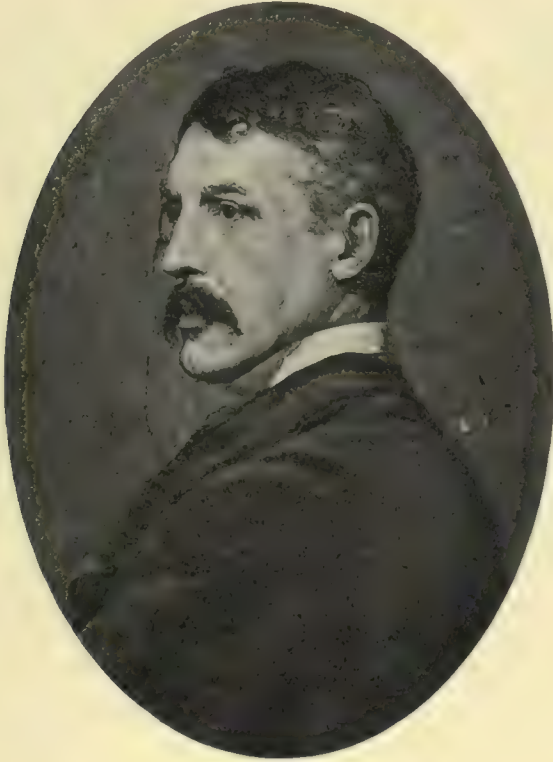


BRAHAM AS LORD AIMWORTH.

and "The Strange Gentleman." John Braham, another member, is also associated with the young author, he being his manager. I recall vividly, when only about five years old, being taken to Warwick Street Chapel on a Sunday, with difficulty finding a place in the gallery there. I see now beside me a rosy-faced, apoplectic-looking man, in a blue coat, not unlike Mr. Turveydrop, bellowing forth stentoriously—"Comfort ye," dwelling on the syllable *com*, which he made to swell

and die away. This was the great Mr. Braham, the robust tenor. I bought his portrait lately, in memory of the occasion—a clever oil sketch by one Sass.

One of the most faithful of the children of the Garrick Club is



SIR S. B. BANCROFT.

Sir Squire Bancroft, a member for some thirty years. He speaks of it affectionately. He has told us of his waking dreams in the smoking room, where he calls up the figures of Charles Wyndham and others, seated by the fire, and telling stories. "Presently they are joined by phantoms of two painters : Elmore and O'Neil, and after-

wards by 'Johnny Deane.' Over an early dinner I hear Phelps telling of 'a splendid day's fishing,' while Charles Mathews whispers to me that 'the only time he ever got fat was when he took to riding.' I perceive in the card-room, the ever kindly presence of Lord Anglesey: the strongly marked features and deep-toned voice of Sir Charles Taylor: the merry eye and musical brogue of Charles Lever, home from his consulate and deeply interested in the Tichborne trial: the gruff exterior which hid the soft, tender heart of Anthony Trollope: the occasional visits of courtly James Clay, the former companion of Lord Beaconsfield in foreign lands, and a monarch at the whist table: the more frequent presence of Sir George Colthurst. I see kindly 'Joe' Langford and dear old 'Bunsby' Merewether, Q.C., arrive for their rubber: 'cutting in' with gentle pipe-loving Edward Bredon, who bore so little the aspect of having been once a dandy in the guards: the great novelist who wrote 'Hard Cash,' and the doctor, who once prescribed for Edmund Kean.

"Then the frequenters of the crowded billiard-room, where I was first welcomed by its constant *habitué*, Captain Syngé. Over a contest at 'pool' I see the portly form and hear the jovial laugh of General Napier; in turn comes the fine head of E. S. Dallas, suggesting portraits of Norwegian kings; by his side is the handsome face of the 'Amiable Brigand,' as some of us for years knew Palgrave Simpson; while next, fresh with some gossip from Pall Mall, is the cheery, 'younger son' as, until his sad and sudden end, Napier Stuart always spoke of himself.

"As I go downstairs again I linger for a chat with Shirley Brooks, fresh from Wednesday *Punch* dinner (to talk with whom for a minute meant to be sure of catching some pearl of wit), or listen to a keen and caustic criticism from Tom Taylor, so soon to be his successor. In the hall I interrupt two Serjeants, who were talking out the points of that day's conflict in the Common Pleas; and as I leave I meet ruminating Henry Byron, whose rare visits to the Club, he laughingly said, made his annual subscription mean 'five guineas a wash.'"

These "Memoirs of Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft" are written in a

most agreeable, unaffected style, full of pleasant stories and recollections. In the modern collection of memoirs—issued nowadays so profusely—there is no more enjoyable reading. They have a story to tell—a most interesting one—and it is told in a very lively fashion.

It is somewhat remarkable that all the editors of *Punch* should have been dramatists and closely associated with the stage. These were Mark Lemon, the first, and one of the founders; Shirley Brooks; Tom Taylor; and Burnand, the familiar "F. C. B." now "Sir Frank." All have been conspicuous members of the Club, and its diligent frequenters. *Punch* is, therefore, intimately bound up with the place, where much of its inspiration has been found. Inspiration of another kind has been quickened by the famous "Gin Punch"—a special recipe, dear to Theodore Hook, and on which I have heard "Boz" expatiate in heartiest praise. "Try that gin-punch," he would say, "and then see!"

Mark Lemon, says his friend Yates, was made for the post of editor—corpulent, jovial, bright-eyed—with a hearty laugh and an air of *bonhomie* he rolled through life. His early career was little known. It was fancied he had been an actor; it was certain, however, that he had kept a public-house in Wych Street, where Albert Smith had heard him cry, "More steaks, gentlemen—coming directly!" He was a good buffoon, and did "funny things." It is not generally known that he was a Jew, strange thing in an editor of *Punch*. "He had a great power in shaking hands, always impressing the owner of the hand shaken that he, the shaker, was covered with glory by the process and steeped in delight. He was patient and long-suffering where his interest was concerned, and would bear without resentment a slight from Thackeray or a snub from Leech." A strange sort of character.

Mark Lemon was a specimen of that extraordinary versatility combined with industry which used to be found in the literary "man about town." He seems to have done all that he could do. He was the writer of sixty plays—mostly successful—a critic

and writer of periodical essays, a public reader and lecturer, a topographer, an actor, a story-teller, and, finally, one of the founders and editor of *Punch*! It was in June, 1841, at his own house in Newcastle Street, Strand, that he and Mayhew drew up the prospectus. It ran perilously near to extinction, but he is said to have saved it just in the nick of time. His salary was at first 30s. a week.

Shirley Brooks, who succeeded, was more correct in style, and offered yet another combination of callings. He was a reporter in the



SHIRLEY BROOKS, NOVELIST, DRAMATIST, AND EDITOR OF "PUNCH."

House of Commons, writing the "summary," and was sent to the East End by a newspaper to inquire into the state of the poor. He produced about a score of successful pieces, wrote for magazines, also edited various journals; then tried his hand on novels, writing the "Gordian Knot" and "Aspen Court," which had much success. In 1870 he became editor of *Punch*, a post he occupied for four years. His humorous contributions were of a special kind, and original, such as "The Naggletons," which can still be read with enjoyment, though the germ is in the "Caudles." Sir F. Burnand describes Shirley Brooks

as handsome, bright-eyed, brilliant in talk, quick-tempered, but easy-going and the cheeriest of companions. He had a ready gift of versifying, and could knock off an epigram, a "par," or a light article at any moment. He wrote the well-known "Essence of Parliament," and was the recognised suggestor of subjects for the cartoons.

After him came Tom Taylor, who was a remarkable man in many ways. His father was a common labourer, yet the son made himself a Fellow at Cambridge and Professor of English Literature—declining the allowance which his father, who "rose" to be a wealthy brewer, paid him, so that his brothers and sisters might have more. He even became "a coach." He was called to the Bar—went on circuit, then entered the public service as Secretary to the Board of Health at a salary of £1,000 a year. This was a curious and industrious record, but it was but a tithe of his labours as a dramatist. He wrote more than seventy plays! He was a "leader writer" on several journals, contributed to *Punch*, and, on the death of Shirley Brooks in 1874, succeeded to the office of editor, which he held but for six years. He was, besides, a safe, judicious editor of books—notably on art—such as Leslie's "Life of Reynolds," "Haydon's Biography," &c. He will, however, be always recollected as having "increased the gaiety of nations" by furnishing Sothorn with the famous character of Lord Dundreary. Tom Taylor, his friend Edmund Yates says, was not a success as editor, being vacillating and fidgety, long-winded and dull. He fancied he was a poet, and used to consign his very serious lucubrations to *Punch*. His merits were his punctuality, kindness of heart, and good nature.

It might be said that no play has been more constantly acted by amateurs, as well as professionals, as "Still Waters Run Deep," which was of French origin, being taken from "Le Gendre," which was a novel, not a play. He was a very gentlemanly-looking man, of quiet and interesting manners, accomplished in many ways, so that it became astonishing to think, as you looked at him, that he had been a common labourer's boy. Though practical and business-like in his methods, Tom Taylor was impulsive and even romantic. When Miss Terry—

now Mrs. Lewis—was quitting the stage, he wrote a series of almost rapturous criticisms in *The Times* on her gifts and perfections—one might have thought it was a Siddons making her final courtesy. In 1868 or 1869, he was at Jersey, and discovered at the theatre a truly lovely creature, wife of the manager, with “ever so little” of an Irish

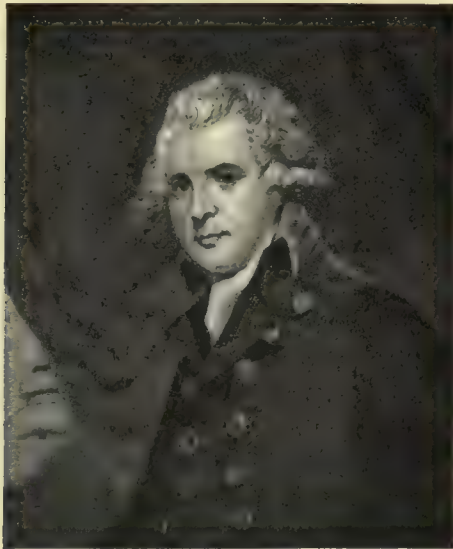


TOM TAYLOR.

brogue. He induced the pair by flattering hopes and all sorts of encouragement to come to town, and actually wrote several plays for the lady who was no actress, but whose “face was her fortune,” or, as it proved, her misfortune. The poor thing, intoxicated by flattery and admiration—she was really a lovely being—had a disastrous course, the home was broken up, and she died in want, but repentant.

Tom Taylor, however, had at least shown his judgment and sagacity, for all his prognostics of her social success were justified.

I well recall him, with his little, spare figure, and wiry grey beard—a quiet, gentlemanly man, and yet a power. It always seems that it is the man that magnifies the office, not, as the vulgar supposes, the office the man. Thus in Taylor's day there was a deal heard of "the *Times* dramatic critic"—he was pointed out as such—



R. B. SHERIDAN.

who had a vast secret power of some sort. I have often wondered *why* he was always called by this familiar name "Tom," which was his proper official one. It may have been because his mother was from Germany, where names like "Bill" and "Tom" are used seriously. Edmund Yates used to tell of the German who was in hot haste to meet the literary critic, whom he described as "*Tumtaler*." Where was *Tumtaler*? he was eager to meet him. No one could understand; but it was at last understood that he meant Tom Taylor.

He had a wonderful knack, which none, I think, have shown since—save, perhaps, Sir F. Burnand, in “The Colonel”—of adapting foreign plays to English tastes. Witness the striking “Ticket-of-Leave Man,” long forgotten, but which had the most extraordinary success. Neither in plot, dialogue, or character could one have had the slightest suspicion that it had been written by a French author and in the French tongue, yet the original is thoroughly French. All his pieces are fresh and animated, full of life and character, such as the “Overland Mail,” the “Unequal Match,” and others. He was a great Frenchman, and it was wonderful to see him at the time of the visit of the French Players chatting with Sardou, and “Sarah,” and others in the easiest fashion. One of the most agreeable evenings I can recollect was spent at one of these performances, when he sat next to me and poured out criticisms, and anecdotes, and gossip anent the interesting performers.

Most of us will recall “Johnny Deane,” that pleasant Irishman—with a round and yet rather grave face—pink coloured. The likeness in the Club displays his features admirably. When he spoke there was often a seriousness as though unconscious of his own humour. An empty, giggling youth was repeating some very flat saying to “Johnny,” who was listening gravely and sadly—when to him the youth : “You see don’t you ? That’s where the joke comes in !” And then “Johnny” with extra slowness and gravity, “No doubt your view is quite correct.” There was nothing in this—but it was the tone—the sham respect that made the youth retire into himself. “With him” was O’Dowd, another lively Irishman.

We could thus run on, enumerating many more of the cheerful souls who have illuminated the Garrick ; but we must now turn to the more “illustrious defunct” who live again upon the walls.

PART II

THE GARRICK CLUB PORTRAITS

PART II

THE PORTRAITS

CHAPTER I

CHARLES MATHEWS THE ELDER



THE spirit that seems to haunt the chambers of the Garrick Club is that of the amiable, buoyant, and brilliant Charles Mathews the Elder. When we think of the Club it is not of an assemblage of the gay and witty beings whom we have been describing, but of the wonderful gallery of dramatic pictures, each showing the player "in his habit as he lived," and also in the habit in which he displayed all his talent: the face which he wore in common life and that which he, as it were, donned to give expression to his part. Wherever our eyes wander to they rest on some memorial of Mathews. It is his monument, and the visitor is invited, just as he is at St. Paul's, "to look around him" if he would seek a memorial of the man. In the Hall there is indeed an inscription, but it is to the memory, not of the collector, but of the donor of the pictures. More particularly is Mathews bound up with the memory of Garrick. Garrick's speaking features are familiar enough and found everywhere, but nowhere else but at the Club can we look for these wonderful presentments of stage scenes,

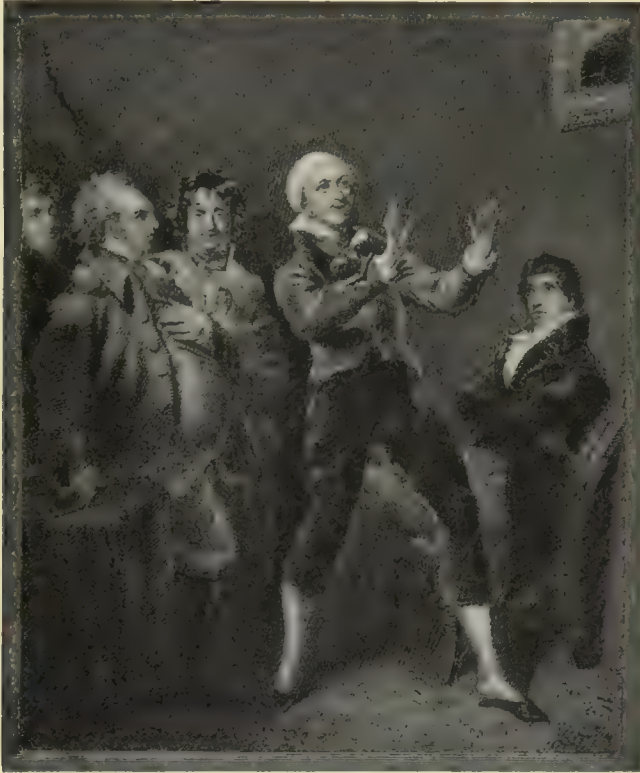
Zoffany's work, which show us how the performer looked upon the boards, how he was dressed, and how he bore himself ; how the scene was arranged and lighted. Of Garrick he had collected with unwearied diligence every known or accessible portrait, the finest as well as the poorest engravings. What a tribute was this to the genius of the great player, the limning of whose face seemed thus to be an almost inexhaustible business.

Mathews is scarcely so celebrated for his talent as he ought to be. There is the tradition of his Protean gifts and extraordinary versatile ability. But his native character, accomplishments, and even literary ability were really amazing. The hundreds of letters which are collected in the four stout volumes which his clever wife put together, are full of spirited narrative, vivacity, and even wit. As letters they must always hold a high place. His little descriptions of droll scenes and passing touches of character are truly admirable and make most amusing reading. These are mostly addressed to his wife whom he tenderly loved. It might be suspected that there are not so many husbands who, in the midst of professional fatigues and weary travelling, would expend their mental energies and hours of time, in drawing these scenes for the amusement of those at home. The actor on tour is likely to content himself with a business-like record without seeking to entertain : but Mathews was a most amiably domestic being. His talents, as I said, were truly extraordinary. His amusing exhibitions in private life were not of the practical joke order, but were inspired by the true, genuine spirit of gaiety, and were often witty and original and done for his own enjoyment. Such as, for instance, his diverting tricks on John Kemble described on another page.

Like some of those double impersonations which he gave with such effect at his entertainments, Mathews's life had both a serious as well as a farcical aspect. The poor mime, who brought fun and frolic with him wherever he went, was at home pursued by disaster and harassed by trials of the most distressing kind. Pecuniary embarrassments came as of course in the case of one who was so

careless always in his expenditure, for even this harmless hobby of the dramatic pictures was quite beyond what, as a struggling player, his earnings entitled him to indulge in.

He was extravagant, not in his pleasures, but in gratifying his



MATHEWS.

Studying four of his most celebrated characters, Fond Barney, Mr. Wiggins, A Drunken Ostler, An Idiot.

tastes. He had no idea of the value of money, and never thought of putting by for a rainy day. He enjoyed fine salaries, could get his own terms, but never seemed to have cash. He loved to bet at races, he lent money to friends, and was constantly being robbed or taken

in. Once he let his house to an agreeable family of the name of Thompson, who paid no rent : until one day his eye fell on an account of an auction at the cottage, where he found that everything had been sold off and the family had disappeared ! Seven hundred pounds was his loss. Something, however, escaped—a number of old portraits that were stored in an outhouse. This was the germ of the dramatic collection which he had just begun to gather.

Of course nearly a hundred years ago old portraits of this kind were to be picked up at low prices, but still the collector even then had to pay a vast deal more than others did ; for dealers and others knowing that he *must* have their wares, would insist on a large or fancy price. It would be difficult to calculate what the collection cost him, but, considering that there were over four hundred pictures, many rare, many by painters of the first rank, he must have paid some nine or ten thousand pounds. Mrs. Mathews tells us that the sum offered for them was but a tithe of what had been paid, and the offer seems to have been about a thousand pounds. At the present time they might be valued at six times that sum, and at a sale it would be no surprise in these days of sensational prices to find the great Zoffanys fetching two or three thousand pounds apiece. Mathews was continually looking out for anything that would be an addition to his treasures, and his numerous friends as well as the dealers, were sure to let him know of anything that was in the market. Of course he was often imposed upon, and there must be in the collection works with high-sounding names which are only pretenders. One of the puzzling things about the collection is that we find a number of portraits confidently marked as by Hogarth, Reynolds, Kneller, and other masters. Yet a glance at each shows that they must be copies. To this category belong Foote's portrait, the original of which is at Knowle ; and particularly Hogarth's portrait of Quin the actor—a good performance, but scarcely suggesting the vigorous touches of that great artist. As I write, however, the magnificent portrait of the actor—a true and unmistakable Hogarth—has been sold by auction, and has been secured for the National Gallery. The superbly bold and

resolute touches put the Garrick *soi-disant* Hogarth out of court. I can fancy how this happened. When in his latter days he became pressed for money, he disposed of his most valuable works, having copies made which answered his purpose just as well. In the case of his other pictures we must allow something for enthusiasm and lack of judgment, something also for being "taken in" by the dealers.

In a collection of this kind, which is virtually a gallery in a private house, there is constantly arrangement and re-arrangement, according to the caprices of the moment and the necessities of convenience. No picture, therefore, is secure of a fixed position, and no cataloguing or numbering therefore is possible. Within a few years pictures that were in the drawing-room have been shifted to the dining-room and *vice versa*. All the more important pictures, however, are so striking in the colouring, subjects and grouping, that a visitor, familiar with the style of the different painters, will have little difficulty in finding what he is seeking for. The pictures, as it were, announce themselves. Thus every one will recognise the striking features of Garrick. It would be difficult, therefore, if not impossible, to draw up a satisfactory catalogue. I am obliged, therefore, to give a simple description merely of the pictures.

One of the advantages of this collection is the opportunity it furnishes of seeing the work of the great histrionic painters, in their finest "form." They were great artists in their way—Zoffany, Harlowe, Clint, De Wilde, Van der Gucht, Grisoni—who seem to have spent their time studying the stage and the performers. Zoffany and Harlowe were beyond a doubt the most distinguished of the group. Leslie and Ward were fond of depicting imaginary scenes from Molière and other dramatists, but we always note how unreal is the effort when compared with the pure theatrical artists who painted what they saw.

Mathews lived at Ivy Cottage, Highgate. As the pictures accumulated and covered every foot of the walls he determined to build a gallery. His son was a pupil of Pugin's the architect, and the latter was engaged to design a suitable hall where they could

be displayed to advantage. Mathews was social to a degree and loved to see his friends, and his invitation to "come out and see the pictures" was, of course, attended by accompanying hospitalities. There, however, his troubles began, for the outside public, with the meddlers and busybodies, who must see what is not easily to be seen, used to besiege Ivy Cottage and press to be admitted.

When an intelligent and interested visitor went round the gallery Mathews would grow interested and relate anecdotes of the subjects of the portraits. Sometimes he would take a long stick in his hand and imitate the style and jargon of the common Cicerone. He would thus often good-naturedly entertain these strangers, but when he found himself in the hands of an "out-and-out bore" he would go incontinently, leaving the astonished visitor abruptly. Sometimes a too large party would arrive by appointment; when the host would take flight and escape the ordeal. Other visitors were of a more inconvenient kind. One in particular almost forced his way in.

Mrs. Mathews gives an amusing account of the way they were harassed by these sightseers and busybodies, who were constantly attempting to gain admission to see the pictures, for which they did not care nor understand in the least.

"At the very moment arrived an old gentleman of very precise aspect, and of old-school breeding, treating Mr. Mathews with the minuet bow of his youth, and expressing his very high sense of the favour granted. On being ushered into the gallery, he looked confounded at the number of portraits, and made many observations upon them that proved him a tolerable judge of painting; but, at the time, it was clear that he had never been into a theatre in his life—that is, judging from his total ignorance, not only of the features, but of the *names* of the actors. And after toddling about the room for a short time, he suddenly inquired, 'Whether there was a portrait of *Milton* amongst them?' A concise '*No*,' answered the inquiry, and evidently chagrined the old gentleman, who again betook himself to the portraits, making the most lame and impotent conclusions respecting them; and once more he expressed his regret, and indeed

his *surprise*, that Mr. Mathews had not possessed himself of a portrait of *Milton*, which he deemed an oversight in the collector—to all of which my husband (a little impatient at such a mistaken view of the present collection) remarked, in a *rather irritable* tone :—‘Milton, sir, was not an *actor*!’ Adding, with some force of emphasis—‘And I *never* admit *any person* into *this room* who has not been an *actor*, or acted at least *once*!’ At this intelligence the blood mounted to the very roots of the old gentleman’s powdered pate; and, drawing up his shrivelled person with formal dignity and evident offence, he observed :—‘*Then*, sir, I must consider *myself* an *intruder*!’ And, bowing stiffly—more, as it seemed, in compliance with his own inveterate good breeding than any real courtesy to the person before him—the matter-of-fact old gentleman, whose (now) only pleasure was to be displeased, backed himself out of the room, and, in spite of his astonished host’s endeavour to explain his meaning—and following him to the gate for the purpose—persisted in getting into his attendant carriage; when, with another starched bow from the window, he disappeared, leaving my husband, like the portrait of Garrick between Tragedy and Comedy, doubtful whether to laugh or to cry, be grave or gay, lively or severe, at such a piece of provoking stolidity.”

As years passed by and pecuniary pressure increased, the player grew less enthusiastic, and, no doubt, as nearly every hobby rider does, said often, “I wish I had all the money back that this thing has cost me.” It was then that the folk who had come out to see the pictures, and lunch and dine at his cost, suggested to him a notable plan. These art admirers argued that their own enthusiasm and that of the casual visitor was clear warrant that the general public, if appealed to, “would come in their thousands.” In this fashion he was certain to recoup himself for all his outlay. This notion pleased him, for it would be a recognition of his good taste and bring a substantial honorarium. Accordingly, in 1833, the poor, beguiled player was induced to take a large room in “the Queen’s Bazaar” in Oxford Street—I presume what is now the Soho Bazaar—and removed thither all his pictures. The younger Charles drew up a

Catalogue raisonnée, a clever piece of work with many light biographical notices and illustrations, and the show was duly opened.

Mrs. Mathews's account of the break up of the cherished gallery is touching and interesting.

"In consequence of all these harassing and accumulated evils, Mr. Mathews began this year with a great struggle between inclination and duty. By his repeated and serious losses and speculations entered into with a hope of what he felt must soon be necessary to him, namely, repose from professional exertion, his income was so much lessened, that to continue his present style of living was out of the question. The cottage and gallery required *keeping up*, no inconsiderable part of the cost of a place of this kind, and the number of servants requisite, with horses, carriage, &c., rendered a longer possession of this prized abode a matter of concern far outweighing its advantages. The first and greatest difficulty was the destination of the pictures. Where could they be placed without injury? and what London house could hold them advantageously? His friends being consulted, advised their sale. This was a blow to my husband's happiness even beyond the separation from his darling cottage. The thought upset all his fortitude. However, he paused before he decided. He then asked who would be the purchaser? 'The Garrick Club *ought*,' it was said, 'to have them.' This suggestion in a great measure reconciled him to the idea of parting from them. To have them where he could look at them, *and, above all, see them kept as an unbroken collection*,—this, indeed, would comfort him under a separation. The Club, however, offered so small a sum for the gallery, which had cost Mr. Mathews so much labour and care to collect (about one-fifth of what was originally given for them, without reckoning the interest of money for so many years), that the idea of parting with them was wholly given up. At length, after much persuasion and struggle against his own feelings, he consented to have them exhibited,—not so much with a hope of gain from such exhibition, as with a view to their present safety and ultimate sale. Well, indeed, was it that no pecuniary feeling urged their removal;

for, when the accounts of the exhibition were closed at the end of the period they were before the public, it was found that the loss exceeded a hundred and fifty pounds! The gallery, which ostensibly drew such numbers to our house, while as many more were denied admittance year after year,—without the presence of its proprietor, was not found worth one shilling cost to behold!"

Thus it proved an utter disappointment. Few came, and no curiosity was excited. As the poor, faithful Mrs. Mathews, who kept up her husband's spirits and hopes under all trials, notes sarcastically, so long as the collection was exclusive and there was a difficulty in getting admission, every one was eager to come; but once it was open to all, and for *payment*—*there* was the rub!—the thing was altogether changed. It should be said, too, that it was hardly suited for a public exhibition. The pictures were not *showy* enough and too antiquarian in their character—though as a private collection it had a different interest.

Certain literary friends, however, did their best to make a stir. Some excellent criticisms—"puffs" even—were written on it. One in particular, by one of the first, most unique of English writers, has become inseparable from the collection itself—nay, *is* the collection itself put into words—words more vividly coloured than the colours themselves. This was the faithful Elia's tribute, which will send the Mathews Gallery down to posterity.

In Mathews' Gallery, at the time his catalogue was issued, there were just 415 portraits, an amazing collection for a private person to get together. Many of these were repetitions of the same subject. Thus of John Bannister there were five; of Baddeley, four; of Bensley, three; of George Frederick Cooke, seven; of Dodd, three; of Downton, three; of Edwin, four; of Elliston, the same; of Emery, seven; of Fawcett, five; of Garrick, no less than twelve; of Henderson, four; of Holman, six; of Edmund Kean, five; of John Kemble, eleven; of Charles Kemble, three; of Thomas King, five; of Thomas Knight, three; of Edward Knight, four; of Lewis, four; of Liston, six; of Charles Mathews, twelve; of Moody, three; of John Palmer, five; of Robert Palmer,

three ; of Parsons, six ; of Mrs. Powell, five ; of Quin, three ; of Quick, four ; of Sneth, three ; of Mrs. Woffington, three ; of Woodward, three ; of C. M. Young, four.

An additional interest is supplied to the theatrical groups when we learn what is the exact situation in the drama that the scene portrays. These Mathews and his son took much trouble to furnish, and in the elaborate catalogue the proper quotation from the play is given. Though this, in many cases, must have been a rather speculative guess. Further, the quotation would not have much helped the spectator if he were ignorant of the play.

The extraordinary collection of water-colour portraits representing the younger Charles Mathews—Charles James—in innumerable characters, very spiritedly painted, is a wonderful record. Everything is there—attitude, expression, costume. We may speculate—did he sit or stand for every one, which would have entailed over a hundred such operations ? Or were they his own work, for he was a very skilled operator in this way. There is, however, no artist's name attached. One reflection is suggested—how much the dramatic effect then depended on grotesque costume !

CHAPTER II

THE ACTOR-PAINTERS



THE collection might gain in being displayed to its fullest advantage were it rearranged under the direction of a skilled artist. The Drawing Room, as being the best lighted, ought to be the centre of attraction, and here all the best—the *very* best—pictures ought to be displayed, just as it used to be in the case of the *Salon Carré* at the Louvre. We would banish all the modern things which have little interest, and put in their stead all the masterpieces. Here would be the finest Zoffanys—the Macbeth, the Hamlet, and the matchless Lord Ogleby. With these I would have one of the Clints; the Colley Cibber; the flamboyant Woodward; some of the Hogarths, including the Woffington; Pine's head of Garrick; Mrs. Siddons. All inferior works should be ruthlessly "skied." Harlowe's scene from the "New Way" is capitally placed where it is in the Dining Room, and should not be moved. That great *curio*—the scene from "The School for Scandal," which so delighted Elia—should be put in a place of honour, and in a good light.

It is astonishing how many distinguished members of the Royal Academy are to be found gathered here. We have nine works of Philips, one of Sir Edwin Landseer; of Singleton, three; of Gainsborough, two; Beechey, three; Sir Thomas Lawrence, three; of Shee, three;

Cosway, one ; Cipriani, one ; Chalon, one ; Russell, one ; Romney, two ; Sir Joshua Reynolds, one ; Morland, one ; Sherwin, one ; Angelica Kaufmann, one ; Loughterberg, one ; Opie, one ; Jackson, one ; Coates, one ; Clint, many ; Wilson, one ; with half a dozen more of these "immortals," nigh thirty in all. We have also Lely, Hudson, Hogarth (*nine* pictures by him), De Wilde, Hayman, Harlowe, Zoffany, Grisoni, Van der Gucht, Stewart, the American artist, Sherwin, Kneller Pine, Wright, Coates, Dupont, Westall, Worlidge.

One of the disadvantages of having a picture gallery in a private house or club is the impossibility of securing sufficient light for the pictures. We have the wall space but not the light, which comes through the front windows, not from the top as in a regular gallery. Now here all the pictures hung upon the outer wall—that next the street—must be in comparative darkness. Yet the arrangement is unavoidable, for the space cannot be sacrificed. One particularly fine picture of Zoffany's, the scene from "Speculation," becomes thus all but lost in a Cimmerian gloom. As it is, however, the difficulty has been met as successfully as it could be under the circumstances. As the position of the pictures is often changed, and a new arrangement made, and, further, as there are no numbers, it is a pity that a regular *Catalogue raisonnée* has not been drawn up. That of the collector, Charles Mathews, would be an excellent model—marking each one described with letters, showing the room in which it is hung. Thus H. would stand for the Hall ; S. for the Staircase ; L. the Lobby ; D.R. the Dining Room ; S.R. the Smoking Room ; G.R. Guest Rooms ; M.R. Morning Room ; Li. Library. This might furnish a sort of guide.

"The portraits by Zoffany," says a critic, "are certainly the best, though there are many by the veteran De Wilde full of character and identity. It is curious to contrast the peculiarities of the olden actors with the general common-place air of contemporary players. There is nothing so sleek, so unctuous as Suett ;—Harley, for instance, has a 5 per cent. £20,000 look—he might pass for a successful linendraper. He has no touch of the picturesque vagabondism of Weston, and the

immortal Dicky. Farren, too, who keeps a green carriage and footman, wants the oily coziness of rare old Quick. Then there is Macready; put him beside George Cooke and, compared to the consumer of brandy, he has the staid, severe air of a rich dissenting preacher. Downton maintains something of the olden time; he looks and speaks as though he had acted with the Jordans and the Lewises.

"This collection presents a good history of the stage, told alike by beautiful and curious faces. We read the history of the players, of the people who chatted with Dryden, and who took directions from Goldsmith (it may be in his immortal, peach-coloured coat); of the fair eyes that captivated kings; of the white brows that gave a lustre to a coronet. There is beauty of every kind, from the quick, kind-hearted eyes of Nell Gwynne to the soft, languishing gaze of Miss Foote."

This fine collection of portraits was presented to the Club in the year 1852, while it still occupied the old premises. As the worthy Peter Cunningham says, the Club was "named after David Garrick, to denote the theatrical inclination of its members. A lover of the English drama and stage may spend an hour or two very profitably in viewing this large collection." This was not the first of the kind. What became of the Paddy Green pictures? A good many, I believe, were bought by Mr. Hailes Lacy, of the Strand, who, while collecting his theatrical *omnium gatherum*, would not, of course, leave out pictures. How well I now see these heterogeneous faces huddled together on the walls of Evans'! There must have been two or three hundred there. And I see also Paddy himself promenading about, a rubicund, tight-throated, bewigged fellow, suggestive of "Joey B," or the Regent himself.

In the Hall of the Garrick is inscribed on the wall a very fitting and grateful inscription, recording the gift of the pictures and the name of the donor. This is as it should be, for Mr. Rowland Durrant behaved to his Club in a very generous way. First of all, he secured the pictures with a view of their being ultimately purchased by the Club; he then transferred them to the Club on loan, and for years

they continued to adorn the walls, and finally, when it was found that the purchase was beyond its resources, he made it a present of the entire collection. Such a gift was almost unprecedented. Of late years, particularly since the advent of the present energetic secretary, who came from the Athenæum, much care has been bestowed upon the pictures. They have been "looked to" and re-arranged, and most of them protected by glass. But a good deal more in this direction might still be done. Of this amiable stockbroker, John Rowland Durrant, the donor of the admirable portraits which have really given the Club its *cachet*, we have this pleasant account in Barham's notes. "A stockbroker on 'Change, and one of the kindest and most upright men I ever met with. He rose from a low origin to great wealth, which he principally made by sales, &c., during the war. In early life he was an amateur actor, and was always passionately fond of the drama, having a private box of his own at Drury Lane." A pleasant form of artistic enjoyment is found when after the guest has been invited to lunch and view the pictures, he is taken from room to room, some one who knows and has studied the business acting as "showman," and pointing out all the beauties, associations, &c.—a pleasing sort of entertainment and a different thing from the blind, sheep-like fashion in which the crowds wander through modern collections.

Does it ever occur to any one in our time how seldom it comes about that nowadays the player is painted in the act of performing. There are none of these scenic groups to be seen in which here the players look so interesting and command our attention. On the other hand, we have over-abundance of Mr. — and Miss — in what are called "*Cabinet Photos*," stuck, like Lofty's head, in the shop windows all over the town. We may wonder what can be the reasons for this change of taste. They are, unhappily, but too obvious. It is only *real acting*, or a telling situation, or pure comedy, that can inspire the painter. The stage is now so overlaid with earthy decorations that the mere acting, or the telling expression, is lost. The painter who would now record the dramatic situation could only paint the rich

costumes of a fancy ball, and vacant faces. One can fancy Zoffany or Clint dropping into Drury Lane night after night, delighted with the sparkling intelligence, the wit, the expressive eyes, the gestures of the Pritchards and the rest—then rushing home and declaring, “I *must* make a picture of that situation.” But now! the blaze of light abolishes all expression; the tameness of the style of playing now in vogue supplies no material.

In truth, our players do not now “act with their faces.” There is no anticipation of what is coming by reading the emotion in the eyes, the corners of the mouth, or in a nervous gesture. These things, indeed, could scarcely be observed by an audience; for the reason, paradoxical as it may seem, of there being too much glare. We are “blinded with excess of light.” For everything is so bathed in effulgence that there is no shadow or no relief. Of the old actors, such as Kean, we constantly hear how much was to be read in his eyes, how they flashed with rage or lowered with jealousy or malignity.

Neither have our painters now the art of seizing an expression or situation and recording it in the memory for use. This was absolutely essential to produce a stage picture which no one could sit for. Now models and draperies are your only wear: everything must be visually before the artist, and he must copy. The process of the Harlowes and Zoffanys was very different. They saw the play several times and seized on some situation in which the actor revealed his humour. This they registered or noted and painted at once while the image was fresh before their minds. Another visit enabled them to alter or correct what they had done. We can be assured that this was their method by applying it to Zoffany’s fine picture of Lord Ogleby. Any one that has stood before it and looked at it for some moments will not easily forget the expression, the attitude, and the whole figure. It is a new sensation, and if he has any facility with his pencil he could set it down on paper. So was Zoffany impressed by the originals.

“In dreams I often stretch and strain after the countenance of

Edwin, whom I once saw in 'Peeping Tom.' I cannot catch a feature. Parsons and still more Dodd were near being lost to us," says Elia.

It is only natural. How can players who are merely repeating the platitudes of society and are engaged in the trivial excitements of society, find anything to stir their feelings? The commonplace, second-class actor of our day has but a dull, emotionless face, whose muscles are torpid from lack of practice and movement. What few actors have their fortunes in their faces! We learn this from these dramatic portraits. In our own day the actor's—or actress's face is somewhat inexpressive, and after the pattern of the rest of the community. A gallery of the existing performers would, in truth, have no interest, and the reason is that their exertions are bestowed on tame, unexciting pieces which cause no mental tumult or struggle and therefore no wear and tear of the facial muscles. Sir Henry Irving has, indeed, a remarkable face, full of expression and suggestion: so have Wyndham, Farren, and a few more. It has been said that there have not been in the whole community more than half a dozen faces that you would stop in the street to look back at. These were Irving's, Gladstone's, Cardinal Manning, old Phelps, and Buckstone.

It has often been lamented that the actor's work is so evanescent—it is known to those only who have *seen* him. For posterity there can only be description. And yet is it not wonderful what a property we all have in Garrick, Kemble, Siddons, Kean, and the rest? We know them perfectly—and their style—we have a pride in them and in their life and doings. Some way or another, we have settled that we *have* seen them or as good as seen them. It is most curious this. We can talk about them with knowledge. Their portraits, grown quite familiar, recognisable by every one, help the illusion. What should we be without the memory of these large Personalities? They are a real benefit to social history. The actors of our time, alas! do not now loom thus largely, nor will they hereafter. They have not that weight in their age—and are now grown too multiplied.

We have often heard, in the pleasant ballad, of a face being a fortune, but in the case of the truly comic actor it is literally true. There are some of the moderns of whom it could be said with strict



BUCKSTONE IN "SPADO" ("CASTLE OF ANDALUSIA").

and even exuberant truth—Liston and J. B. Buckstone—and the present inimitable J. S. Clarke. The former, of course, I never saw, though I did his "double," Lord Carlisle, of whom Liston, in one of the caricatures, is represented complaining, "This fellow will take the bread out of

my mouth." These expressive, speaking faces are worth thousands of pounds to the owner. This delightful actor whose Captain de Boots, Dr. Pangloss, and other characters, used to convulse audiences—simply by his astounding facial changes, faithfully reflecting the humour within—is now too seldom seen. Once being more than usually diverted by his exhibition I wrote a rather minute account of his humorous features, how they worked, &c. This caught his eye in the States, and long after, having a light farce in hand I offered it to him for the Haymarket, when to my surprise he instantly accepted and produced it, telling me that he felt grateful to me for the justice I had done to his physiognomy. I was equally grateful to him.

Nowadays we—we, the newer ones that is—have no idea what the attraction of a popular comic actor was then. People went to see *him*; they "took him" like a tonic. You "went to see Buckstone"; you looked forward to seeing him; you went at half price; you heard his cheery voice behind the scenes when all were recreated with anticipation; you saw him and were convulsed, and for days afterwards lived on the recollection of that night. As you walked the street, or thought of him just before going to sleep, you still smiled and chuckled at the recollection. He was thus company off the stage as well as on it.

CHAPTER III

ELIA ON THE ACTORS



ELIA'S wonderful description of the "Old Actors" always shows us the Garrick Gallery of Portraits as it were, in epitome, the writer has so perfectly caught the feeling and spirit of the whole collection. There is a sort of quiet raillery ; and he besides touches nicely what is the chief interest of each item. Such things can strike only a nature of this rare and delicate intelligence, while another may turn helplessly and vacantly from the one picture to yet another, seeing only a number of ordinary faces. The visitor should read the sketch before inspecting the pictures.

"I was refreshed," he says, "with their portraits (fine treat !) the other day at Mr. Mathew's Gallery at Highgate, which with the exception of the Hogarth pictures, a few years since exhibited in Pall Mall, was the most delightful collection I ever gained admission to.

"There hang the Players in their single persons and in grouped scenes, from the Reformation—Bettertons, Booths, Garricks—justifying the prejudices which we entertain for them ; the Bracegirdles, the Mountforts, and the Oldfields, fresh as Cibber has described them ; the Woffington (a true Hogarth) upon a couch, dallying and dangerous ; the screen scene in Brinsley's famous comedy : with Smith and Mrs. Abington whom I have not seen : and the rest whom

having seen, I see still there. There is Henderson, unrivalled in Comus, whom I saw at second hand in the elder Harley : Harley the rival of Holman in Horatio ; Holman, with the bright glittering teeth in Lothario and the deep passionate sighs in Romeo, the jolliest person ('our son is fat') of any Hamlet I have yet seen, with the most laudable attempts (for a personable man) at looking melancholy : and

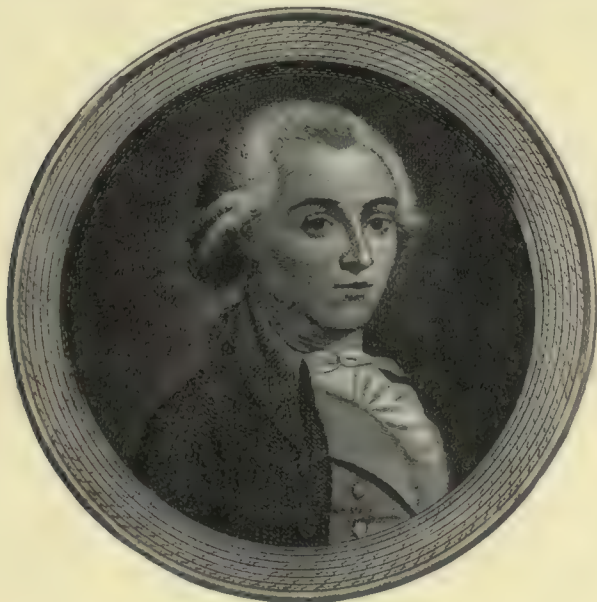


F. AICKEN AS PHOCION.

Pope, the abdicated monarch of Tragedy and Comedy in Harry the Eighth and Lord Townley. There hang the two Aickens, brethren in mediocrity : Wroughton who seemed to have forgotten that in prouder days he had personated Alexander." ¹

¹ The phrase always delights me "there hang the two Aickens, *brethren in mediocrity*," which might be applied to many a pair of performers existent as well

It is evident that in the case of these actors of the genuine "old school" the *face* was as important a histrionic vehicle as the voice or action. We have no idea in these days what marvels used to be accomplished by this mode of expression. The "low" or "broad" comedian somehow found himself furnished with large rotund features, and eyes which were perfect recesses of humoursomeness. In this line Munden seems to have been supreme. There is a speak-



HOLMAN, TRAGEDIAN.

as non-existent. They were two painstaking Irishmen, weavers originally—of all trades!—one a most quiet person enough, but nicknamed "*Tyrant Aicken*" from his thundering style in tragic parts, while the brother was usually found in the characters "of an honest steward or an affectionate parent." This latter challenged his stage-manager, John Kemble, and actually discharged his pistol at him, but missed—a situation perhaps unprecedented in stage annals. And Quick, too! I never hear the name without calling up Elia's phrase, "the retired Diocletian of Islington." Old fellows, louts, country-bumpkins of the type of Tony Lumpkin—these were the parts that he created.

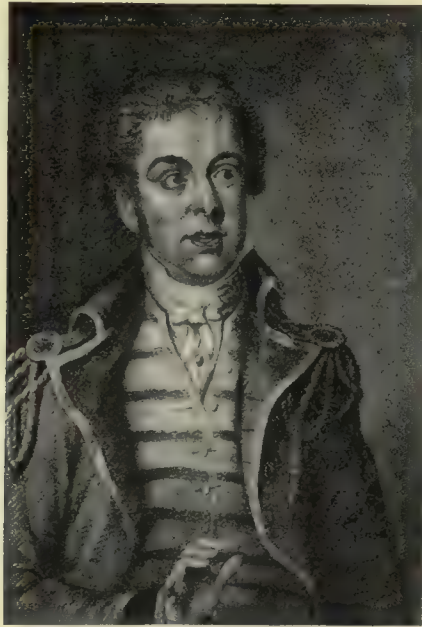
ing portrait of him here. What marvels this face could work, has not Elia told us in a previous passage? "There is one face of Farley, one face of Knight, one (but what a one it is!) of Liston; but Munden has none that you can properly pin down and call *his*. When you think he has exhausted his battery of looks, in unaccountable warfare with your gravity, suddenly he sprouts out an entirely new set of



MUNDEN.

features. He is not one but legion. Not so much a comedian as a company. He, and he alone, *makes faces*: applied to any other person the phrase is a mere figure, denoting certain modifications of the human countenance. Out of some invisible wardrobe he dips for faces, as his friend Suett used for wigs, and fetches them out as easily. Who, like him, can even throw, or ever attempted to throw, a

preternatural interest over the commonest daily-life objects? a table or a joint stool, in this conception, rises into a dignity equivalent to Cassiopeia's chair. You could not speak of it with more deference if it were mounted into the firmament. He understands a leg of mutton in its quiddity." This is somewhat metaphysical, but still intelligible. We feel somehow that here is the instinct and impres-



LISTON AS JACK GAWKY.

sion of true acting. Acting can turn these inanimate things into glorified objects—the player being a magician.

There are two portraits which should touch us nearly, because they once touched Elia, and prompted that feeling and vivacious retrospect of the enjoyment these players had furnished to him in this admirable essay, "Some of our Old Actors," and which he so unaccountably—for it was as good as anything left—cut away from

the essay, on its re-publication. These are Dodd and Parsons. His

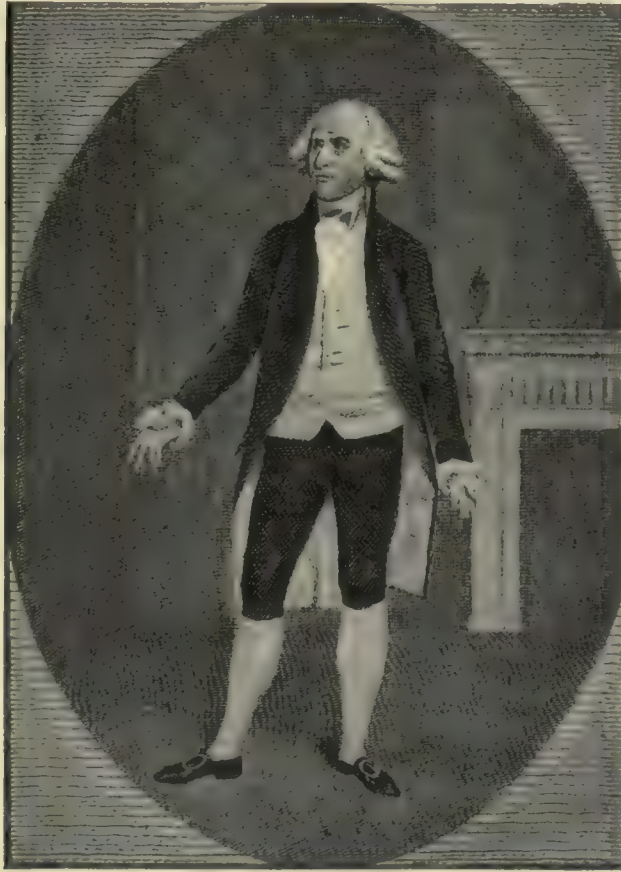


DODD IN THE CHARACTER OF LORD FOPPINGTON.

"Why two hours, and six of the best nags in christendom, or the Devil drive me."

sketch of Dodd is as "telling" as a bit of real acting. Who does not

recall it? "Few now remember Dodd. What an Aguecheek the stage lost in him. Dodd was it, and as it came out of nature's hands. In expressing slowness of apprehension this actor surpassed all



BENSLEY.

others. You could see the first dawn of an idea stealing slowly over his countenance, climbing up by little and little, with a painful process, till it cleared up at last to the fulness of twilight conception

—its highest meridian. He seemed to keep back his intellect, as some have had the power to retard their pulsation. The balloon takes less time in filling than it took to cover the expansion of his broad moony face over all its quarters with expression. A glimmer of understanding would appear in a corner of his eye, and for lack of fuel would go out again. A part of his forehead would catch a little intelligence and be a long time in communicating it to the remainder." An amazing description truly—the next best to reality.

Who will forget Elia's immortal description of Bensley in the "Twelfth Night"—an education in the laws of acting: "Bensley threw over the part an air of Spanish loftiness. He was starched, spruce, opinionated, but his superstructure of pride seemed bottomed upon a sense of worth. There was something in it beyond the coxcomb. How he went smiling to himself! With what ineffable carelessness he would twirl his gold chain. What a dream it was! You were infected with the illusion."¹

The two Palmers, "Jack" and "Bobby," we have, of course, never seen; but thanks to Elia we do know them as well as if we had, as well as we know our Irvings, Trees, and Alexanders. My old friend Joseph Knight, or "Joe" Knight as most prefer to call him, has brought together all that is known about this pair. No one can ever forget Elia's careless strokes and touches, as "for sock and buskin there was an air of swaggering gentility about Jack Palmer. He was a gentleman with a slight infusion of the footman." After this we know him and see him perfectly.

The general style of dress is rich and gaudy, and seem to belong to the regular wardrobe of the theatre. I do not believe that there were then costumiers as we have them now, or that sets of dresses were ordered when mounting a play. When performing a comedy they had only to go to the ordinary tailor who provided them with a

¹ After this we think somewhat sadly of the strange, unaccountable conception of this delightful character by its latest exponent, Mr. Tree, *e.g.*, entering always at the head of a train of five comic servants, graduated in height, and marching to a grotesque tune!

handsome suit such as the actors themselves wore outside the theatre. For plays like *Richard III.*, or tragedies in general, there were "stock" dresses kept in the theatre—noblemen with ruffles—slashed sleeves, trunks and hose of rich material. Richard wore a sort of generic king's dress such as we see it in Dance's well-known tent scene—a



ROBERT PALMER.

crimson velvet mantle, trimmed with ermine—velvet trunks and hose and so on. I believe this sort of generality was more effective, and added to the illusion far more than the present antiquarian accuracy of type. As when Charles Kean wished to have the ancient helmets—according to pattern, it was found, according to the antiquaries, that each must be flat and round with a projecting bit of metal at the

back, so that the whole had a most absurd and very perfect likeness to an inverted *stewpan*. The common typical helmet, albeit incorrect, conveys the idea far better.

Apropos of actors' memoirs ; it might be said the most diligent and satisfactory work in this direction is the long series of lives



"BOBBY" PALMER IN THE CHARACTER OF TAG.

furnished to the Dictionary of National Biography by Mr. Joseph Knight. This offers an extraordinary specimen of painstaking accuracy as to dates, places, contested matters, &c. : so that, as I have often thought, he might be induced to take up and complete the no less wonderful work of Geneste, which lies a sort of torso. Not less curious was it to find a Bath parson devoting his time and

energies to such a pursuit. Knight's performance is far more artistic, being lit up with many a judicious criticism, original as well as quoted. To Geneste, certainly all writers on this subject owe much. He is not unentertaining in his way, writing his serious "reproofs" to both actors and writers : "it *was very wrong* of Garrick to announce



JACK PALMER IN THE CHARACTER OF THE STRANGER.

this play, &c.," and his seriousness over the smallest detail is truly comic.

These players' lives offer the strangest combination of incidents. Palmer was the son of a private soldier. In tragic excitement he was once stabbed by Mr. Barry. He was said to ill-treat his wife, and this report damaged him in Liverpool. Much alarmed he sent for her, "who, hiding the bruises on her face inflicted by him, walked

about the town in his company and thus restored his good name." What a trait! Most interesting, however, is it to think that he was not only the original Joseph Surface, but the actual one. He was the character by nature and habit. "If you could see my heart," he began once to the author. "Why, Jack, you forget I wrote it," was the answer. "Plausible Jack" was his nickname. Look at this pretentious portrait of him as Rosenberg, in "The Siege of Belgrade," by Arrowsmith, full faced and portly, but with little expression. To crown his adventures, he was unhappily destined to be one of those "leading cases"—more than usually tragic, of the actor dying on the stage. He had lost his wife and one of his children, and became despondent. He was playing in "The Stranger," and on some allusion to such misfortune, fell back and died.

The effect of finding oneself in these brilliant chambers is truly unique and extraordinary of its kind. As we look round, it seems to be peopled on all sides with living figures, all pretty much on the same scale, brilliantly arranged, and all in animated attitudes. There is dramatic movement everywhere, something "going on" in all directions. This effect is not found in the ordinary galleries. Reminiscence is at work every moment.

One of the most interesting and pleasing pictures is at the top of the stairs, next the Library, that of "Master Betty—The Young Roscius" as he was called. It is an animated picture, full of grace and spirit, and it is easy to see that the painter, Opie, did his work under the full inspiration of the "Betty Mania." "This," say a critic, "is one of the very few pictures by Opie in which he has shown himself capable of being as gentle, graceful, and bland, as he was usually forcible and spirited. The character is young Norval, the picture is the size of life, and the lovely boy is represented advancing down towards the spectator as he did in the days of his glory, and pronouncing in a voice never to be forgotten, '*My name is Norval.*'" This is a just and accurate criticism. The portrait, too, proves clearly that there was much more *legitimate* attraction than is commonly

supposed in the powers of this prodigy, and that he must have had a winning charm and natural inspiration. "I must insist," goes on the critic, "that the young Roscius died on the very day when Mister Betty was born. Here, however, by the art magic of Opie's pencil, he does still live. Let me add, before quitting this delightful picture of him, that the young Roscius was the only actor who ever knew exactly when to quit the stage." "Mister Betty" was among us till not very many years ago, a respectable, rather prosaic, figure, known for his liberal donations to theatrical charities. This picture is placed in too great shadow, and would gain by being transferred to the wall on the stairs.

In the highest place, in the drawing-room overtopping the rest, as is very fitting, is placed a capital portrait of the original Collector of the Collection, Charles Mathews the elder. This is by Lonsdale and judiciously painted. It gives us a good idea of the shrewd, humorous face, in the act of observation, and is in fact the face we should expect. There is good-nature present also. A very clever and original design of Harlowe's hangs in the Drawing-room close to the door, representing Mathews seated in a chair and surveying *himself* as embodied in four other characters (see p. 117).

This picture of John Hippesley—said to be by Hogarth—is interesting, as the actor was Garrick's manager and fellow comedian on his first appearance at Ipswich, where a fragment of the old theatre still remains, worked into a Salvation Army house of meeting. A most extraordinary rarity was sold this year at Sotheby's, viz., the actual bill of his first appearance at Ipswich under the assumed name of Lyddal in *Duretête*. This was 1739. It is now in my possession. The bill of his first appearance in London, at Goodman's Fields, is now *introuvable*, though a facsimile of it is in existence. Another Hogarth is the portrait of Christopher Bullock, who died in 1724.

A capital characteristic scene, from the dramatic expressions of the faces, is that from "The Village Lawyer," with Bannister and Parsons—the latter's face admirable for its mixture of cunning and

bucolic stupidity. The piece, a French one of broad humour, once enjoyed immense popularity. The lawyer wins the case for his client by instructing him to answer "Ba—a—a" to every question; but when he comes to claim his fees, the rustic applies the same tactics and keeps answering "Ba—a—a" to every request for payment.

Garrick died in 1778, and as the Club came into existence in 1831, or fifty-five years later, there must have been a good many persons, both without and within the Profession, who had known him or remembered him. There were some of his own actors still lingering on. William Linley, Mrs. Sheridan's brother, was an early member, and must have known or seen him. Holland was one of Garrick's "followers," and originally a baker—hence Foote's jest on his death, "they had put him in the family oven." There is much about him in Tate Wilkinson's *Memoirs*. By some chance his will has come into my possession.

Here is Dodd who had been thirty years at Drury Lane, and was engaged for Garrick by Hoadly, who described the wonderfully dull face which so delighted Elia. "He has a white, calf-like, stupid face that disgusted me much till I heard him speak, and throw some life into it." A coxcomb seemed to be his favourite character—"the high red-heeled dandy of the old school of comedy." "Parsons, and still more, Dodd," adds Elia, "were near being lost to me till I was refreshed with their portraits (fine treat) the other day at Mr. Mathews' gallery at Highgate; which, with the exception of the Hogarth pictures (a few years since exhibited in Pall Mall), was the most delightful collection I ever gained admission to."

Tom King, another of the Garrick "School," was one of the great performers who was always anxious to be received as "a gentleman"—a weakness not wholly unknown in our days—that is, he went on visits, hunted, talked of lords, and conveyed in his performances that he was well accustomed to the life he portrayed. This is all clearly shown in his figure and bearing. He was

certainly of the old race of the fine comedians—the solid, reserved, effective player, every word, every stroke telling. One of the last of this type who gave what Johnson would call an adumbration of the



MRS. POPE (MISS YOUNGE).

old Garrick and Kemble players, was an old performer in the Compton troupe, Baker, I think, by name.

A large and "important" picture which hangs on the staircase wall exhibits Pope in one of his leading parts, and is really interesting as depicting the intense and exaggerated form of tragedy

that was in favour a century ago. It represents the death of Beverley in that very agonising piece, "The Gamester." The unhappy man is shown in the centre, distracted with remorse and the physical pains of the poison he has taken, while round him are grouped the



MRS. WELLS.

sympathising members of his family. The worthy Pope is the central figure; on his right is his unhappy, much injured wife, indulgent to him all through and personated by Mrs. Pope, who is tossing her arms in the wildest grief. There is the faithful Jarvis on his left, *i.e.*,

Hull, while Mrs. Wells is the sympathising friend. Mrs. Wells was one of the most beautiful creatures on the stage, and later was known as Mrs. Sumbel; she was not much of an actress, her face



CHARLES KEAN.

being her fortune. She wrote some strange memoirs of her life, after the pattern of those written by Mrs. Bellamy. Hull was notable as having founded one of the Actors' Benevolent Funds—provident

institutions which seem destined always to "gang agley." I really think "The Gamester," if acted with reserve, and genuine, unexaggerated feeling, would be found one of the most heartrending and touching displays of passion known to the stage. It suggests the moving and piteous sorrows of *Clarissa Harlowe*. In these days of recitation and declamation, we seem to have lost the true note of suffering. Our actors appear to think that such sorrows can only be exhibited by the medium of words, that there is no 'haviour of the visage, of the gesture repressed, the agonised bearing, &c. Another of these impassioned dramas is the touching "*Venice Preserved*," with its fine poetry and situations.

There are many tales of the effect produced by Mrs. Siddons as Mrs. Beverley, how she had to whisper to the actor who was playing with her, and who was quite overcome, "Recollect yourself, Mr. —." On the other hand, Jack Palmer, who played Stukely the villain, was so natural and persuasive that at times she could hardly tell that he was not making his approaches in reality. All the females in the group are on the floor, tossing their arms wildly. The last agonising death of Beverley that I recall was given by Barry Sullivan in exactly this antique method; he rolled on the floor and filled the stage and theatre with groanings, as though actually suffering from the gripings of poison.

The picture of Charles Kean on the stairs as Louis IX. brings back a time, half a century ago, when this player represented all that was advanced and refined in his profession. The Princess's was then what the Lyceum used to be some years ago. His arrangements of "*The Bard's*" plays, spectacular and other, were thought to be triumphs of stage lore and management. His processions were the talk of the town. But the modern stage-manager would smile at their rather elementary character. Even in this picture of the actor, looking at the little images fixed in his cap, there is a sort of artificial earnestness, a kind of pretence that seems overdone. Such was the note of the acting of the time—little "bits of business" like this which were thought tremendous discoveries, a great advance

in acting. I can hear his "snuffling," horny voice now. In his less pretentious characters he was very pleasing and even interesting. Still dwells in my memory his impersonation of a character in a piece of Douglas Jerrold's, "The Housekeeper," somewhat reproduced in Mrs. Ryley's "Mice and Men." Most pathetic, too, was his, as well as Mrs. Kean's, playing in "The Wife's Secret." But when it came to Hamlet—Hamlet with a perpetual cold—it was another thing.

I well remember the general admiration for this exhibition of craftiness. I must say that it could not be compared with the *finesse* of Sir H. Irving's; though, of course, a generation hence *his* interpretation may not bear comparison with that of some later performer. But the *tone* and charm of his acting will live. As the Bard has it in that most wonderful of all his passages:—

"As in a theatre, the eyes of men,
After a well-grac'd actor leaves the scene,
Are idly bent on him that enters next,
Thinking his prattle to be tedious,"

and this holds more strongly in anything on the stage than in anything else.

CHAPTER IV

ZOFFANY



KEW PALACE, Kew Green, the old church, &c., are full of picturesque and interesting associations ; but for the playgoer and lover of the Garrick Club the old churchyard has a special and touching interest ; for here lies the inimitable Zoffany, the actor's painter *par excellence* in colour, vivacity, expression, and ease of gesture—a second Hogarth.

His name was either Zoffany, Zoffanji, or Zaffanii—so the account of him in the National Biography, written by my friend, Austin Dobson—a brilliant and truly dramatic painter, who came from Ratisbon, where he was born in 1733. He was therefore no Englishman. We are told that after all none of these names were his real one, which was *Zauffely*. He ran away from home to study painting and got to Italy and Rome when he was twelve years old. After travelling about a good deal he returned to Germany where he made an unfortunate marriage, and in 1758 crossed to London to follow his fortunes. Here he was reduced to great straits and was glad to get employment. Zoffany had a good deal of the character of Hogarth's colour and treatment. In fact, he is the only one in this line we can compare with Hogarth. His figures are about on the same scale, and finished with something of the same roundness and brilliance. Given a bit of colour to treat, such as a velvet coat or scarlet waistcoat, he certainly could treat it much after Hogarth's fashion. His faces were solidly

and finely painted. I wish I had some way of bringing before the reader, unacquainted with his scenes, an idea of his effective treatment. Most of his works have been engraved in black and white with fine telling result. There we see the speaking faces, the spirited attitudes, the groupings, though the gay colour is wanting. It is astonishing



DAVID GARRICK, ESQ.

how well his works have lasted and how *fresh* they are, notably his two or three *chefs d'œuvres* to be found here, which is fortunate.

In the Library is a sketch of Garrick, in oils, unfinished save as to the face, by him. This, a remarkable thing, together with that by Pine in the Drawing-room, seem to be about the best records we have of the great Player. As Garrick advanced in life his face

became fuller and more "puffy" and marked. It is extraordinary what a recognisable, original face it is. We know it anywhere, and under any conditions. The amazing, piercing, searching eyes, the large yet expressive mouth, the genial air of humour, the weighty, impressive look of the whole, set off rather than damaged by the white wig; these make his one of the most striking and impressive faces possible. He can hardly be considered an Englishman, for his grandfather and father were exiled French Huguenots. His whole style was French, and the face is that of one of the higher French ecclesiastics.

This unfinished picture, though, strictly speaking, it is only the background that is unfinished, is one of the most spirited and striking counterfeit presentments left to us of the great actor. It hangs in the Library. It originally belonged to Baddeley of Twelfth Cake memory, who gave it to "Billy Dunn," treasurer of T.R.D.L., who transferred it to Stephenson the banker, from whom it passed into Mathews' collection. Baddeley also possessed one of himself as Moses, which he gave to a member of the Savory family.

Some of the most interesting of his pictures are those which depict the costume and general arrangement of the stage one hundred and fifty years ago. The most striking and brilliant of these groups at once arrests the attention as a splendid bit of colouring—Zoffany's portraiture of Garrick and Mrs. Pritchard in the great scene from "Macbeth"—a perfect masterpiece in this *genre*—and painted in the artist's most masterly style. Seen near, or from a distance, it at once seizes the eye; the life, animation, and colour is beyond description. It is valuable, too, as showing us how "Macbeth" was played in those days, and how Garrick and his gifted companion bore themselves in tragic moments. "It is taken," says the critic of British Galleries, "at the moment when Macbeth returns from the chamber, after having completed the murder. He is holding forth his hands and exclaiming with a horror-stricken countenance 'this is a sorry plight.' The countenance is highly expressive and characteristic, but there is a singular *want of truth and propriety* in the attitude of the lower

limbs." An odd criticism that reminds one of a well-known "aesthete" now long vanished from the scene, who remarked of a well-known and popular performer, "Well, do you know, I see



MRS. PRITCHARD.

a great deal of *pathos* in his legs—particularly *in his left leg!*" It may be doubted, however, if the quotation correctly described the situation in the play, as Mrs. Pritchard is holding the daggers. Moreover, the Mathews catalogue suggests another situation.

The passage is :—

“Infirm of purpose!
Give *me* the daggers: the sleeping and the dead
Are but as pictures: 'tis the eye of childhood
That fears a painted devil: if he do bleed
I'll gild the faces of the grooms withal!”

When she goes out, Macbeth, who has just said, “I am afraid to think on what I have done!” remains in his terrified attitude. It was also suggested that the moment was when he exclaims, “This is a sorry sight” (looking on his hands).

But whatever be the accurate interpretation of the acute horror of the crisis, it supplies a good idea of Garrick's *facial* methods, better indeed than a whole page of description. His features, mouth and brow are contracted in a rather conventional way, but his hands admirably painted show a nervous terror, the fingers spread out and clearly quivering with the emotion. The figure is well planted on its feet, though the attitude is somewhat stagey. But both the faces clearly indicate what was then the principle of facial expression, by the affectation of horror produced by contraction of the muscles and intensity of expression. Everything was far more favourable to this facial expression than it is now, for the light came from above and fell upon the face, while the rest of the stage was but faintly illuminated. This seems the true principle. The dress is a rich bit of colour, a greenish coat with broad skirts, the front well laced with gold, the breeches of a vivid scarlet. Mrs. Pritchard seems to be arrayed in voluminous white satin, a portly, full-faced dame, but of powerful feature. Garrick's dress is clearly intended as suggesting military costume, but it not unfairly warrants a popular jest of the day—possibly Foote's—at the expense of this very picture, that it was a struggle between the cook and coachman for the possession of the carving knives.

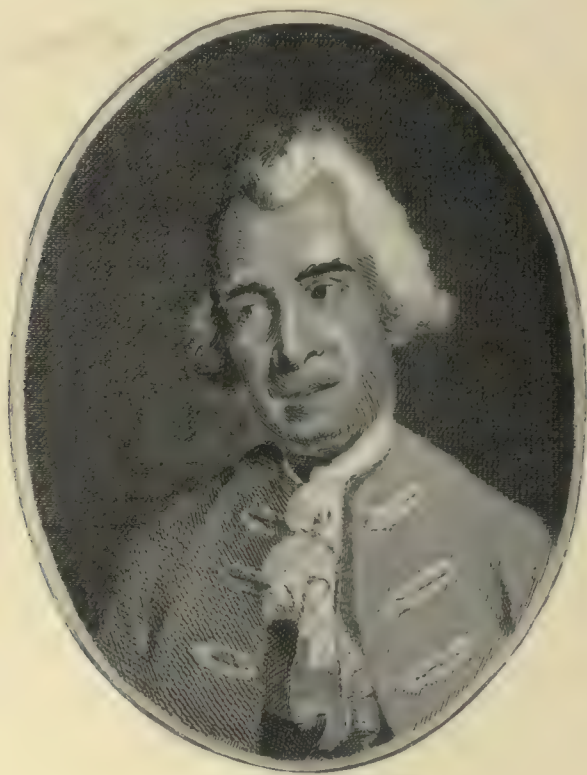
Garrick's face suggests that he was “forcing” his emotions. The attitude, too, is very formal and artificial—his legs in one of a dancing master's “positions,” and his hands—and finely painted

they are—in that of an elocution professor. Mrs. Pritchard is somewhat antique about the face—an elderly lady we might say, of coarse features. There is, indeed, here little of the illusion of the stage—a portly, elderly pair, discussing their business.

And yet how incongruous, it will be said, is such a costume. It has been often repeated that it was the custom then to play Macbeth in the dress of an English general officer; but then he would wear a scarlet coat, not scarlet breeches. It is, indeed, extraordinary that a man of such good taste as Garrick could not see the impropriety of this exhibition, and that such a "merry Andrew" dress, though intended to be extra sumptuous, could not but distract or interfere with the dramatic effect. The dark, sober costume of the gentleman of the day would be far more in keeping. It was long before the regular Scottish dress was adopted—first, I believe, by Kemble; though this was almost as incongruous, for it was the "fancy dress" devised in modern days by the costumiers. No one, of course, could tell exactly what was worn by Macbeth and his contemporaries.

Perhaps the gem of the whole collection is the brilliant and masterly piece by Zoffany, depicting a well-known scene in "The Clandestine Marriage." The grouping, the character, the richness of the colouring, the perfect firmness and security of treatment here displayed are extraordinary. There is great minuteness in the handling, yet the whole effect is of the broadest. Were this picture set up at Christie's now, it would be saluted with "a round of applause," and perhaps easily fetch many thousands of pounds. But for a little hardness of outline there would be a suggestion of Gainsborough. The author of "British Galleries Art" criticises it, and declares it to be "truly exquisite merely as a work of art; but when regarded as including the portraits of two most accomplished artists in their way, it becomes doubly valuable. It represents King and Mrs. Baddeley in the characters of Lord Ogleby and Fanny. It assigns the moment to that passage in the celebrated *equivoque*, where the gentle-hearted and polished old nobleman exclaims, "O, thou amiable creature! Command my heart, for it is vanquished." (The

old, dilapidated beau fancied that he was quite irresistible with the sex, and that he had gained the fair Fanny.) "Nothing can be more rich, and at the same time more truly refined, than the expression of King in this scene. It is evident that the rest of the picture is purposely



KING AS LORD OGLEBY.

kept in subservience to this part of it. Mrs. Baddeley's being a mere incidental portrait, and Baddeley, who is represented as Canton (his valet), being put into the background. This picture is in excellent preservation, which is usually the case with Zoffany's works, and it is painted in every part with great care and skill."

To this acute and cordial testimony it may be added that the dramatic situation is brought out admirably. Everything centres in the crabbed old beau who expresses but the one thought—his own attraction. We note the stiffness of his aged figure which he tries to force into a graceful, languishing attitude ; the seductive leer on his



MRS. BADDELEY.

From Zoffany's Clandestine Marriage in the Garrick Club.

gnarled features—which becomes a sort of senile “grin.” The painting of the embroidered coat, with its rich mixture of violet colour and wrought embroidery, must have delighted Millais, often found at the club, and was quite in his manner. The fair heroine is stately enough

and placid. She seems to tolerate her antique admirer. The greenery of the scene harmonises with the rest. It adds to the piquancy of the whole when we learn that the lady was the wife of the performer who played the valet, but from whom she had long been separated.

Charles Mathews gives this succinct note on Mrs. Baddeley. "Mrs. Baddeley was reckoned a great beauty, and died in extreme poverty, 1786, aged thirty-eight." How significant is this, and most true, also ! The unfortunate lady supplied an account of her adventures to a sort of faithful confidant and treasurer, retailing these adventures in the most vulgar shopkeeping style, which unfolds all the vicissitudes of her course—now in "the lap of luxury" with dukes and peers at her feet ; now reduced to the most miserable straits from disease and destitution. And in this condition the once admired actress and beauty, who had sat to Sir Joshua and other artists, died. A sad story.

The great manager had always the reputation of being eminently strict and decorous in the direction of his theatre, so we are a little surprised to find how tolerant he was in the case of such personages as Mrs. Hartley, Mrs. Bellamy, Mrs. Baddeley, and others.

There is a very dainty little sketch of this Baddeley, the old Garrickian actor, in pencil and tint, by that charmingly graceful artist Cosway. It is not more than two or three inches square, but is most expressive, depicting a quaint-looking old fellow, with spectacles on nose, and nose in the air. Baddeley is known for his green-room legacy, the interest of £100 allotted to providing cake and wine at Drury Lane on Twelfth Night.

Baddeley's will bears date April 23, 1793 ; but it is not generally known that he left a much more substantial legacy to the profession in the shape of a house at Moulsey, where "four comedians, not disinclined to live together, might be accommodated." Some legal defect made the bequest void ; but it was calculated that it might by and by reach £360 per annum. The property accordingly passed to the Crown, who, however, later gave it over to the Drury Lane Fund. Baddeley was clearly a vain being, for he directed that

"Baddeley's Asylum" should be painted on the outside, and his executors were to publish every year in the newspapers a sort of vindication of himself in his "disagreement with his unhappy wife," the notorious Mrs. Baddeley! The absurd cake in the green-room



BADDELEY AS CANTON IN "THE CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE."

After the sketch by Cosway in the Garrick Club.

costs every year three pounds, for which sum the confectioner, say, Messrs. Buzzard, could hardly satisfy a large number of persons. The managers, however, usually added punch. The well-known Alderman Birch, of Cornhill, whose old-fashioned confectioner's

shop may still be noted, used to supply an extra cake with accompanying punch, so that a larger number of actors might be recreated, and under Mr. E. T. Smith's *régime*, the noted A. Soyer always attended with a fine bowl brewed by himself with particular care and savour. But who can forget the late Sir Augustus Harris's celebration of this anniversary, when he invited literally half London



G. ANNE BELLAMY.

to his fine theatre—the stage laid out as “the Halls of Dazzling Light”—where the pantomime had been in full swing but an hour or so before. Here were jewels galore, crowds of actors and actresses, champagne flowing like water. This recurring every year, when more and more were clamouring to be invited, became at last intolerable.

It was a quaint notion that Baddeley, who left the funds for the annual Twelfth Cake and wine, should have been himself a *confectioner*, and had learnt this trade in Paris. This explains why he so often undertook "broken English" parts, such as the Valet Canton, Papillon, &c.

The "memoirs" which Mrs. Baddeley and George Anne Bellamy have left—written for them of course, for they were incapable of such composition—offer the most disastrous pictures of the rise and fall of the actress-courtesan: at one time enjoying every luxury; then in the hands of bailiffs; then prosperous again; until age and decay arrive—and with it illness and inexorable poverty.

It is interesting to compare with this fine picture Clint's treatment of another scene from the same play, and of another actor in the same part. This excellent piece is in the Card-room, close to the window, and is painted with much refinement. The old beau at his dining-table, and arrayed in his dressing-gown, is a portrait of Farren, the "Old Farren" we used to hear of, whose fine, expressive features, well cut and intelligent, suggest quite another order of ideas to King's crabbed presentment of the old "buck"; here he is a man of more refinement and not so farcical. The face is strongly reminiscent of his clever son, the "young Farren," as he was long called—now "old Farren" in his turn, and lately our one and only Sir Peter. Putting the two side by side, Clint, clever as he is, is "nowhere" beside Zoffany, who seems as one of the old Masters.

I can recall the young-old Farren, at a time when this very comedy was revived—one of "the palmy-day pieces," as Mr. Hollingshed used to call them—telling me that he had kept carefully this very flowered dressing-gown of Clint's picture, and intended to wear it. Assuredly, if pictures can give evidence, we have only to consult the wonderful figure of Zoffany's to see that King was as far superior to any of his successors as Zoffany was superior to Clint. The admirable mezzotint of Zoffany's picture, by M'Ardell, almost reflects the colouring, at least the dappled shadows, of the original. It is a wonderful work in its way—full of movement, and "capital company,"

as is often said of a clever terrier. A fine, choice copy now fetches a vast sum.

There is another piece of the same class and also by the same excellent artist. This represents Garrick and Mrs. Cibber in



WILLIAM FARREN ("OLD FARREN").

"Venice Preserved," as Jaffier and Belvidere. Both are arrayed in black, as is suited to so tragic a crisis. In this curious scene, a rather grotesque struggle is going on between the lovers, and Garrick, arrayed like Mr. Sterne in a black coat and smalls, is menacing, his

arm aloft, the poor lady who is dragging herself to his feet. His gymnastics are most energetic. Jaffier is rather in a "straddling" attitude; and there is a palpable contest going on. "O, Mercy!" exclaims the lady. "Nay, no struggling," he replies. Then she, "Now, then, kill me!" This was the old *palpable* way.

Another of Zoffany's interesting groups is the scene from "Hamlet" with the silver-tongued Barry and his wife as Hamlet and the Queen. "Do you see nothing there?" "Nothing at all; yet all that is, I see."



SPRANGER BARRY.

It furnishes a very good idea of the romantic style of these two great players. The figures excite our sympathies, that of Barry is graceful and youthful, and it is plain that both relied on more than elocutionary power.

In a conspicuous place in the Drawing-room is a large oval portrait of Miss Farren, rather florid—even buxom—in face, and good-humoured. This will not, of course, compare with Lawrence's fine full-length, so well known from Bartolozzi's engraving.

Many pleasing and meritorious pictures are dispersed about the



ROSS IN THE CHARACTER OF ESSEX.

Essex : Am I not your General ? and was I not so by virtue of this staff ?

Card-room and smaller chambers. There is a spirited little Zoffany

in the Card-room, depicting Ross as Hamlet, and which also furnishes some amusement. We can see exactly how this meritorious personage "discharged" the character. It is clear he was of the old, or oldest school. He is depicted a full-faced, comfortable-looking gentleman arrayed in a neat black suit and "smalls"—one of his stockings is carefully turned down. There is a book in his left hand, but he is



S. FOOTE.

expiating on some topic, with his finger uplifted. It has quite the air of a correct *elocutionist*. He is, as it were, reciting.

Here is a finely finished face and figure of that low but witty hound—his own name for Garrick: "that hound, sir," &c.—Sam Foote. There is something groom or ostler-like in his attitude; something suspicious or distrustful; he seems as though he were waiting an opening to do you an ill turn. I fancy it represents him in some character, though this is not stated. Formerly I had serious

doubts whether this was the work of Reynolds, as it professed to be, but, since it has been cleaned and brightened up, some fine work and touches have been revealed. On the other hand, there is a portrait at Knowle by Reynolds, of which it may be a copy. Foote looks what he really was, a sort of pariah. He was uncertain of his position, for his hand was against every one, and he knew not from what quarter might come a blow. There is something also pathetic in his look, especially when we think that the stroke at last fell, and he had to leave the country in disgrace.

There is an animated picture—quite luminous in its colouring—representing a scene in the comedy "Speculation": showing three leading performers in what is evidently a dramatic situation. We should note the "full-blown" and rollicking face of Munden in the centre, the comedy of Lewis on the left, and the pert shrewdness of Quick. Quick was one of George III.'s favourite actors, whom, if he met, he would stop and talk with, and this picture was painted at his express desire. Munden is shown as "Project," Quick as "Alderman Arable," and Lewis as "Tanjore." The situation portrayed is that in Act 4.

"*Ald.* Oh, you consummate scoundrel, this is your speculation, is it ?

"*Tanj.* Why, Billy, the tables are turned, indeed,

"*Proj.* They are indeed. Did the Alderman hear ?"

Quick's likeness is repeated in the portrait hanging on the wall.

This scene from "Speculation" is a feast of colour—full of spirit, and the face is admirable for expression. Look at Quick's head, round and unctuous—his face well coloured with drink, his arm vehement. Contrast with that the refined and elderly Lewis, with his delicate pink face and amused smile, and Munden's perky impudent look of inquiry.

Other Zoffanys are—Garrick as Lord Chalkstone, King as Touchstone ; we have "Little Knight" also as Touchstone : Weston as "Billy Buttons," Parsons in "Lethe," Mrs. Robinson as

Rosalind. Zoffany is indeed a rare master, and here we have a rich collection of his works.

Another Zoffany is that of Knight as Roger in "The Ghost."



QUICK.

He is in a smock frock, and in a state of terror is holding out a spud or a pitchfork to defend himself—a spirited attitude. In our boyish days these bucolic humorists in smock frocks were quite common. They had the same pattern of ruddy face.

There is an essential difference between the work of these two admirable artists, Zoffany and Clint. The latter has the finer finish and a brighter, more limpid, treatment. Zoffany treats his scene as though it were a bit of real life, while Clint has a rather artificial air; we feel that these are actors that are before us. The incomparable Lord Ogleby, of Zoffany, for instance, might be a "snapshot"



LITTLE KNIGHT.

As Sim.

of some old beau communing with himself in a fair garden, there is such a concentrated expression.

Here is a lively scene from a lively comedy—Dr. Hoadly's "Suspicious Husband."

Garrick and Mrs. Pritchard, two famous performers, are exhibited, the one as the gay rake Ranger—the other as Clarinda. There is a particular slyness in Garrick's face. He the professional gallant in a "hat and ladder" part. We must, however, feel some

disappointment at the presentment of that great *tragedienne* Mrs. Pritchard—a massive lady with a coarse expression—a stout personage enclosed in a vast gown of puffed furbelows spread out so extravagantly, that she certainly seems as long as she is broad. In the various pictures of this actress we see the full heavy-cheeked face of an elderly, good-natured lady, recalling that of the late Queen Victoria, and we wonder how a dame of so “motherly” an aspect could have produced such an effect. Dr. Johnson’s verdict, that she was “a vulgar woman that talked of her gowns,” seems borne out, especially in Hayman’s many portraits of her.

This “piece” was painted by him for that strange being Dr. Hoadly, author of the Comedy, and in whose possession it remained until his death. The scene is from Act 4, when the pair are, saying—

“*Rang.* Clarinda !

“*Clar.* Ha ! ha ! your servant, cousin Ranger, ha ! ha !

“*Rang.* O, your humble servant, madam !”

CHAPTER V

HARLOWE—DE WILDE—THE WOFFINGTONS



GEORGE HARLOWE, to whom so much is owing for the preserving to us actors' faces and attitudes, was born in 1787, and lived till 1819. He was therefore cut off early, probably before his full powers were developed. Besides being a fine painter, he had a particular gift for seizing the refinements of a face. His colouring, too, was rich and transparent. Above all, he was directed by a love of the stage and of its performers, of whose doings and general positions he had a high, almost reverential feeling, which he testified in some ambitious groups he painted. Harlowe seems "to the manner born" in these theatrical scenes, where he groups a large number of figures together with such animation and variety. At the end of the Dining-room, close to the door, we have a fine, showy piece of his on a large scale, representing the last scene in the "New Way to Pay Old Debts." There must be nearly a dozen figures here, the centre of which is Kean as Sir Giles Overreach, with a wild look of ferocity, drawing his sword¹ to rush on his daughter, whom the others crowd round to protect her. There is a limpid, delicate tone in the colouring—a transparency and harmony of agreeable hues which we miss in

¹ The sword which he is shown as drawing now belongs to the Club.

modern paintings, where the tints seem heavy and loaded. Kean's is a graceful, even elegant figure, youthful, too, in face—perhaps too tall for our ideal of a short, little man which we always associate with the great player. The women are elegant, graceful figures, not without refinement. It is remarkable, too, that every character expresses something, and shows itself interested in the situation. It is an interesting task to identify each, which one can do by aid of the useful—nay, indispensable Geneste. This fine decorative picture was the gift of Sir H. Irving.

Harlowe is certainly one of the most spirited and artistic of actors' painters. It is strange that at this moment we should have no artists of this description. The cynic might say that there is little or nothing for such an artist to paint, comedy being almost extinct which must be the source of all pictorial inspiration. Harlowe is perhaps best known by the large engraving of Queen Katherine's Trial into which he contrived to introduce the whole of the gifted Kemble Family—John, Sarah, Stephen, Charles. This scene has a curious interest and fascination. The likenesses are so marked and even homely in their character as almost to destroy theatrical illusion. This surely is unique—a great play of Shakespeare supported by a single family.

Harlowe's remarkable memory and power of catching a likeness were truly extraordinary. It is said that he undertook to paint the portrait of a gentleman, just dead, whom he had only once seen in the street, and succeeded perfectly! The figure of Mrs. Siddons in his great piece "The Trial Scene," from "Henry VIII.," is that of a large, majestic woman, but it does not at all lose in dignity. Harlowe for a time had been in Sir Thomas Lawrence's studio, as his "silvery" style and tender colours abundantly suggest. He picked up a style just as he picked up a likeness. His friends had a nickname for him—Clarissa Harlowe—owing to his feminine weaknesses.

Names such as Munden, Quick, Suett, Bannister, when sounded, seem to bring up floating ideas of comedy, farce, or pleasant humour.

One likes to hear them. Their faces, as seen here, are so marked and significant that to glance at them appears to be about the next best thing to seeing them on the stage. With their expressive features before us, and knowing their characters from the plays, it is not so difficult to see the scene in movement. Munden



HARRY WOODWARD.

always suggests some of those large and red-faced, humorous French actors, whose every glance convulses. Quick, like his name, had a sharpened, questioning look, his cheeks rather lantern-like; and there is a dry, "quince-like" tone about the face. One can see and feel the humours that are going on between these pleasant people. But

then there was the stimulant present—the old comedy—the situation, which stirred the talents and feeling of the players. Nowadays the true comedy-power—that of conceiving really humorous situations—seems to have departed.

One of the finest stage portraits here—or, indeed, anywhere—which conveys the style and fashion of the actor in the most supreme manner, is the picture of Woodward as Petruchio that hangs at the far end of the Dining-room. It is the work of Van der Gucht, who must have been an extraordinarily clever artist. For dash, *bravura*, *technique*, and all the rest, nothing can surpass it. It shows us perfectly, too, how the part was conceived and played in those days. Here we have the broad, bold-faced, dashing player; his hat cocked, his eye moist and reckless; jaunty, rollicking, with yet an air of power and high comedy. How splendidly painted, too, are the clothes, how rich and yet how suited to the man as if they were his own, and worn every day! How fine, too, the foreshortening of the arm, how easy the attitude, and how rich the harmony of the colours!

As we ascend the stairs, we raise our eyes to a great full length of the *tragedienne*, Miss O'Neil, one of the most attractive, winning heroines of the stage. It is not exactly a work of high art. The face is rather passionless the red robe somewhat rudely painted and the attitude without much significance. Joseph is the artist, and one would have thought that the fair creature would have inspired him more. The critic of "The British Galleries," however, much admired the picture. "There is one part of the face," he says, "which is extremely well expressed. There is that depth of pathos and sensibility about the mouth which spoke at once to the heart without the aid of the voice. The attitude of the figure is extremely good. It is finely poised, and is altogether without anything theatrical or affected. The colouring, too, is rich and deep in the shadows, and brilliant in the lights. The only fault is in the arrangement of the hair, which is too formal, too unideal, too English. It makes the picture remind us, not of Juliet or Belvi-

dera, or even of O'Neil, but of *Miss O'Neil*." On the other hand, if we may trust the author of "*Pendennis*," this placidity and lack of passion would seem to have been essential qualities of the actress. For it is well known that Miss Costigan, "*The Fotheringay*," and her father were drawn from the old O'Neil and his daughter. The



MISS O'NEIL.

author may have known or must have seen both. She withdrew from the stage in the midst of her triumph, became Lady Becher, and, living to a ripe old age, died in 1872.

There is an interesting story associated with this large "full length" of Miss O'Neil. When quite an old lady she asked to be

allowed to see this counterfeit presentment of herself. She stood before it for some little time in silence, then burst into tears. Memories of her too brief career and triumphs poured back upon her. No doubt she was thinking of her happy era, when all the town was running "horn mad" after her, and the glorious Siddons even was heard to murmur complaints of "the inconstancy of the public."

A capital story is told by Mrs. Mathews of that odd being, her father, which shows how well Thackeray divined his character. In fact Captain Costigan received the young Pendennis in very much the same suspicious style.

"Her door," says Mrs. Mathews, "was daily—nay, sometimes hourly—beset by necessitous and unfortunate Irishmen, until, at length, it was deemed requisite to deny admission to all applicants, *strangers* to the family ; and Miss O'Neil's father undertook to answer all such in person, taking his morning station in the room nearest the hall-door, in order to preserve his daughter from the many interruptions of the servants with cards, messages, &c. One day poor Mr. O'Neil's patience and pocket had been severely tried ; knock after knock—'*jintleman*' after '*jintleman*' had petitioned for *money, orders, situations* in the theatre, &c., and he could, at length, scarcely give his denials in a tone of civility. In fact his temper, as well as his time, was *lost*. In this frame of mind a *loud double* knock seemed to announce some more welcome visitor ; but the servant, leaving the new-comer in the hall, informed his master that he was *a stranger*. Out bounced Mr. O'Neil, who, seeing a very unobtrusive and plainly-dressed little gentleman standing with much apparent humility in the passage, he rather rudely inquired his '*business*.' The gentleman, in reply, informed him that his name was *Moore*, and, having arrived from Dublin, where he had the pleasure of being introduced to Miss O'Neil, and being a countryman of hers, came to pay his respects, and to congratulate her upon her great success in England. Mr. O'Neil looked coldly away from the speaker for a moment, and then, in his own *rare* unadulterated accent, observed

—‘Sirr, my daughter, Miss O’Nale, raelly has so *many* of her counthrymen calling, that it is quite *impossible* for her to pay attention to *all* of them, and——’ ‘But,’ mildly interrupted the visitor, ‘I think if Miss O’Neil knew of my call, she would not refuse to gratify me with a short interview.’ ‘Why, as to *that—that* is what ye *all* say; Miss O’Nale has made up her mind not to see any more strangers, I do assure you, Sirr. ‘But *I* am *not* a stranger,’ urged the gentleman; ‘and if you would kindly tell her that Mr. Moore wishes to see her——’ ‘*More? More?*’ reiterated Mr. O’Neil, ‘I raelly don’t remimber my daughter ever mintioning such a name;—More! More!—no;—I’m sure she doesn’t know ye, Sirr.’ ‘Mr. Thomas Moore,’ urged the petitioner. ‘Oh, it’s no matter whether it’s *Thomas* or *Jack*,’ interrupted Mr. O’Neil, *brusquely*; ‘Miss O’Nale’s done *all* she can for her distrissed counthrymen, I *do* assure you, Mr. More; therefore your seeing her would do no good, and so I hope you’ll take an answer.’ Mr. Moore, amused, yet unwilling through an evident misconception of his errand to lose the pleasure he came in quest of, still urged his belief that Miss O’Neil would admit him if she was aware of his call. ‘Sirr,’ replied Mr. O’Neil with great ill-humour, ‘you raelly *must* excuse me; I can’t allow my daughter to be troubled with any more of her necessitous counthrymen, so good-day;’ and he was retreating when Mr. Moore, smiling, replied—‘I think, Mr. O’Neil, you mistake the object of my visit; I really have no undue favour to ask; I only request that *my name* may be carried up to Miss O’Neil, and, perhaps,’ added the supplicant, after a moment’s reflection, ‘Mr. O’Neil, you will better understand *who* I am if I mention that I am called *Anacreon-Moore*.’ ‘What? *A—nac—nac—Anacreon?* Och!’ exclaimed Mr. O’Nale, in accents of incredulity and derision, ‘You’ve *done it*, now, Misther *More*; I’ll undertake to say there *niver* was such a name as *Anacreon* in all Ireland since the world began!’ At this crisis, fortunately for Mr. Moore’s object in coming, Mr. O’Nale’s graceful daughter descended the staircase, and immediately recognising the distinguished visitor, relieved him from the embarrassing *equivoque*,

though she could not, at the moment, make her father clearly comprehend how so simple-mannered and unostentatious a little gentleman could be, in reality, so *great a man* as Miss O'Neil's reception clearly proved him to be."

But the most versatile and prolific of the Garrick Club limners, as they may be called, was, perhaps, Samuel De Wilde, child of Dutch parents and born in Holland, in 1748. He early showed signs of talent; etched, painted, and exhibited at the Royal Academy. It was about 1795, when he was verging on fifty, that his theatrical bent began to be displayed, when he exhibited dramatic scenes, and, in 1797, some portraits of actors in character. He was so successful in catching a likeness or attitude that, even with those of late generations who have not seen the original, there is a feeling that it *must* be a good likeness. He became irresistibly attracted to this walk of art, and it is stated that "through the course of a long life there is hardly an actor or actress whom he did not draw in their principal characters."

In July, 1902, there was in Bond Street an exhibition of over one hundred of De Wilde's water-colour portraits, admirable, spirited things, full of freshness and good colour. It is clear from this that the Garrick De Wildes have faded from long exposure, or havenot been taken so much care of as these Bond Street specimens have been. We were particularly struck with the powerful facial expression of most of the performers. In fact, their natural, every-day expression was shown in an almost coarse fashion. They might be recognised by any friend or acquaintance as if they were wearing their own every-day dress. The conclusion is that here is no "making-up" of the face, which it would seem was then thought a hindrance to histrionic delineation, for at least one half of the acting was done by the features; even the lighting was only supposed to be for the special benefit of the faces; and it is not generally known that over the heads of the performers hung four chandeliers, to cast the light directly on the faces. One of the most spirited and brilliant of these pictures was that of Quick as Major Sturgeon in "The

Mayor of Garratt," with its gay uniform. A study of this, as well as of the others, would help us to the broadly humorous methods of the players of the time.

From the great quantity of De Wilde's work in the Club, some sixty or seventy portraits, it is clear that Mathews was his patron, and relied upon him to supply portraits of such living actors as he wanted. These were, in fact, "orders." The collection is, in fact, rather too much leavened with this artist's work, as there is a certain sameness in his treatment.

Samuel De Wilde should certainly be considered one of the heroes of the Garrick Club, for his work meets us at every turn. He seems to have done nothing else but theatrical likenesses, but though the likenesses seem to be accurate enough, there is a lack of spirit and a general ponderousness, increased by a sort of general flatness and dulness of colour. His enthusiasm was boundless; he painted everybody, and was to be seen lying in wait behind the scenes at Old Drury, his portfolio under his arm, always on the lookout to take some "snapshot," as it would be called nowadays, of some actor who had before escaped him. He must have done thousands of these pictures. Mr. Harris, of Covent Garden, was his great patron, for whom he painted a vast number of these histrionic likenesses. Some were sold in 1820, and were purchased by Charles Mathews for his gallery at Highgate. Some twenty portraits of a similar character are in the British Museum. All his work is on a very small scale, about 20 inches by 12. They are indeed little more than hasty oil sketches.

There is a rather amusing story connected with De Wilde. A certain Coram, a print-seller, Mathews employed to look out for scarce prints for him. One morning this agent remarked how strange it was that there should be so many portraits of Garrick, and how it was that he contrived to find time for sittings, as he was a busy man. Mathews answered him carelessly: "Why, don't you know, Garrick sat for his portrait every Monday morning of his life?" Not long after De Wilde came to him and told him that he had found a man

who was full of the most curious dramatic lore and who would be invaluable to him in his present occupation, which was that of writing a sort of theatrical history. "For instance," went on the painter, "he told me a most singular and interesting fact this morning, and which I thought you ought to know at once—namely, that Garrick, who was extremely methodical in the arrangement of his time, used to set apart two hours every Monday morning during his life for the purpose of sitting to some artist or other. Hence the vast number of portraits of him extant." De Wilde was not much of a colourist; his tones are cold and even dirty, but his likenesses, we feel, are good. Perhaps we have here almost too much of De Wilde, which produces a sense of monotony and sameness. He died in 1832, when eighty-four years old.

Peg Woffington, by Hogarth, seems an unexpected combination, yet there is no reason to doubt that this picture is by the artist. It is accepted by Mr. Austen Dobson in his monumental work. It is the portrait so admiringly alluded to by Elia. The foot in the satin shoe is in the painter's manner, so is the colouring and the treatment of the dress, and so is the peculiar size. Very rich is the tone of the flowing amber dress, as contrasted with the crimson couch and cushions. The face is ordinary enough, but youngish, with tightened lips. She has just raised her eyes from her book, which she drops carelessly on her knees, and gazes pensively, yet earnestly, at the spectator. The attitude is happy and easy, and much in Hogarth's manner. There is a suggestion of an invalid couch from the many cushions, and it is likely it may have been done in the days after her seizure which confined her to a sofa for the rest of her life. The other, close by, by a French artist, Mercier, is theatrical in treatment. The actress is represented as gazing sentimentally on a miniature of a gentleman—supposed to be Garrick. He is said to have ordered the picture. She has a blue bodice, very open at the neck, a rather coarse face, and thick arms. The number of Woffingtons about the world is large. There are one or two at South Kensington. Sir H. Bellingham, who descends from her sister, the

Hon. Mrs. Cholmondeley, has her portrait at his seat in Ireland. The Mercier portrait was a "commission" of Garrick's. This was, of course, in the days of his rise, when he was under the spell of this brilliant being, writing his famous verses of "Lovely Peggy." He was happily rescued in time by the charms of the beautiful dancer



PEG WOFFINGTON.

"La Violette," so long known as Mrs. Garrick, the exemplary wife and respected widow.

Mercier was a Frenchman, born at Berlin in 1689. He came to London, where he became a sort of Court painter, though he soon fell out of favour. He was supposed to imitate Watteau in his style.

He died in 1760. He was painting at Covent Garden about the thirties of the eighteenth century, up to which time Garrick was under Peg's influence.

In the Club there must be at the least some half-a-dozen portraits of the famous actress. There is also a charming miniature by



MRS. STERLING.

Cosway which, however, does not much resemble the others, being somewhat too refined.

Elia's enthusiastic praise of Margaret or Peg Woffington "on a sofa : a true Hogarth dallying, yet dangerous" is scarcely a correct description. She seems an ordinary person, sitting comfortably enough—scarcely "dallying" or "dangerous." The face is plain and the colouring heavy. "Peg's" mouth showed her low extrac-

tion, and it is evident that her charm lay in a certain readiness of speech and vulgar vivacity.

This portrait is further interesting as having suggested the once popular piece of "Masks and Faces," one of the triumphs of Mrs. Sterling and, later, of Mrs. Bancroft. It is interesting to know that Charles Reade, the chief author, told this lady that the conception of the play arose from his one day having a long look at the Hogarth picture, when the idea took shape. Tom Taylor had an equal share in the work, and Reade owned that, though the whole was very fairly divided between them, the Woffington portions were his. So carefully was the "local colour" and the proper spirit of the time attended to, that careful copies were made under scenic conditions of the principal pictures in the Club, such as Grisoni's Colley Cibber, who figured in the piece; Van der Gucht's Woodward as Petruchio; Zoffany's Macbeth scene; and Garrick as Richard. The Club nowadays—and for good reason—is not so indulgent in granting such permission.

CHAPTER VI

MRS. HARTLEY—MATHEWS THE YOUNGER—THE KEMBLE



RS. HARTLEY, who has a place of honour on the landing at the top of the stairs, is here limned at full length by the fair Angelica herself, and in her most graceful style. One of the loveliest women of her day, she sat to many artists. Sir Joshua painted her several times, as did also Sherwin and Hamilton. She is here a pendant to the young Roscius, and they make a pretty pair. Unhappily, the lady's character did not correspond to her looks. There is a curious escapade of hers described in the Garrick Correspondence. Her talent was not much, but her alluring face and bearing supplied all deficiencies.

At all times we have had these intruders on the stage, whose faces were their only fortune and talent, and who were glad to find so advantageous a place on which to exhibit them. Most have had short and often disastrous careers. Another of these fair postulants was Mrs. Bellamy—George Anne—who wrote memoirs, in which are some curious details of Garrick when in Dublin—true, though likely enough exaggerated.

There is a graphic description of Mrs. Hartley's charms by Moody, sent by Garrick to report upon her. "She is a good figure," he wrote, "with a handsome small face and very much freckled : her hair red, and her neck and shoulders well turned. There is not

the least harmony in her voice, but when forced (which she never fails to do on every occasion) is loud and strong, but such an inarticulate gabble that you must be well acquainted with her part to understand her. She is ignorant and stubborn. She has



MRS. HARTLEY AS CALISTA.

a husband—a precious fool—that she heartily despises. She talks lusciously, and has a slovenly good-nature about her that renders her prodigiously vulgar.” With these qualifications it was likely that she had to depend on her personal attractions. She had an adventurous time of it. I have read a pamphlet called

the "Vauxhall Affray," in which she was the heroine of a scuffle between "fighting FitzGerald" ("Fitzjerrall" it is spelt) and Parson Bates, in whose company she was. "Fitzjerrall" dressed up a common bruiser as a gentleman and contrived to entangle him in a quarrel with the parson, the whole making an amusing story of blackguardism. The fair Hartley was, however, only too delighted to be the heroine. In the papers there was an account of her eloping with one of the Drury Lane performers.

Old Peter Cunningham—an agreeable antiquarian, whose weekly notes were once a feature of the *Illustrated London News*—was a good judge of pictures, and his knowledge of art and artists considerable. In his admirable, gossiping London Guide Book we may assume that he named what he thought were the most striking pictures in the collection. "Observe," he tells us, "Nat Lee (curious); Doggett; Quin; Foote; Henderson, by Gainsborough; the elder Coleman, by Sir Joshua; Munden, by Opie; Kemble, by Lawrence Moody; Elliston, by Harlowe; Bannister, by Russell; Sheridan; head of Garrick, by Zoffany; King, by Richard Wilson; Emery; the Elder Dibin; Powell and his family, by Wilson; Nell Gwynne (namby-pamby, but thought genuine); Mrs. Oldfield, a half length, by Kneller; Mrs. Bracegirdle, three-quarter size; Mrs. Pritchard, a half length; Mrs. Cibber; Peg Woffington; Mrs. Abington; Mrs. Siddons, Harlowe; Mrs. Yates; Mrs. Billington; Miss O'Neil, by Joseph; Nancy Dawson; Mrs. Siddons, a drawing by Lawrence; Mrs. Inchbald, by Harlowe; Miss Stephens; a head of Mrs. Robinson, by Sir Joshua."

Besides these portraits, he notes Joseph Harris as Cardinal Wolsey, the Strawberry Hill picture (Harris was one of Davenant's players, and is commended by Downes for his excellence in this character); Colley Cibber as Lord Foppington, by Grisoni; "The School for Scandal," the Screen scene as originally cast; Mrs. Pritchard as Lady Macbeth, by Zoffany; Mr. and Mrs. Barry in "Hamlet;" Rich as Harlequin in 1753; Garrick as Richard III., by the elder Morland; King as Touchstone, by Zoffany; King and Mr. and Mrs. Baddeley

in "The Clandestine Marriage," by Zoffany ; Moody and Parsons in "The Committee," by Van der Gucht ; Garrick and Mrs. Cibber, by Zoffany ; "Love, Law, and Physic" (Mathews, Liston, Blanchard, and Emery), by Clint ; Powell, Bensley, and Smith, by J. Mortimer ; Griffin and Johnson in "The Alchemist," by J. Van Bleeck ; Dowton in "The Mayor of Garratt ;" and the busts by Mrs. Siddons of herself and her brother Charles.

We have spoken of that delightful painter, George Clint, whose few works are full of geniality and animation. The son of a hair-dresser, and drawn to art, he began by house-painter's work, painting the stonework of Westminster Abbey. He grew acquainted with actors and theatrical folk, and in time his house in Gower Street became the regular meeting-place of all the actors and actresses. He thus became thoroughly familiar with their expressive features, which have more "wear and tear" than any others. He was also much at the theatres, and bore away with him images of their attitudes, gestures, and humour, all which fitted him for painting them effectively. Hence the pleasant freedom and spontaneousness of the fine works that we see in the Dining-room. One would almost think that the artist who could so faithfully limn the expression of the scene and the appropriate bearing of the actors must himself have been no mean actor.

The part of Flexible in "Love, Law, and Physic," in which he was limned by Clint involved the lively Mathews in some embarrassment. He had introduced a sort of trial scene in which he gave imitations of barristers, and when he came to the judge's charge he found that unconsciously he had been mimicking a very high legal functionary. "The effect was quite astounding to him, for he had no idea of its being so received. The shout of recognition and enjoyment indeed was so alarming to his nerves, so unlike all former receptions of such efforts, that he repented the attempt in proportion as it was well taken ; and a call for it a second time fairly upset him, albeit not unused to loud applause and approbation.

"The next day and the next the press was partially occupied in objecting to and in defending the introduction of a subject by the author, open in such hands to such effects. Just before the commencement of the second performance of the piece, a noble lord (now a marquis) requested an interview with Mr. Mathews at the theatre. On this occasion he contrived, in language the most courtly, yet without any definite expression of his object, or more than a vague intimation of the high authority by whom he was deputed, to make his errand fully understood. His lordship was soon satisfied that he had no occasion to use any argument to influence the performer, for Mr. Mathews proved to him at once that he had fully resolved, from the moment he found his imitation received with such extraordinary vehemence, not to repeat it.

"The piece commenced, and a most crowded house greeted him. It was plain that a great sensation had been created. The pit was dense with gentlemen only. The inimitable Liston was not so much attended to as it was usual for him to be; and the anxiety for the judge's charge was fully apparent by the manner of hailing the change of dress which bespoke the period of the representation. The barrister's defence was received with great applause; but, when the judge began his charge, a restless dissatisfaction appeared, and Mr. Mathews was interrupted by a call of 'Imitation! imitation!' from all parts of the house, and loudest from the pit, which was said to be almost filled with 'men of law.' The clamour was so great that at length the object of it went forward, and obtaining a momentary pause, respectfully inquired, what was the pleasure of the audience? Here a simultaneous answer burst forth—'The imitation! the imitation!' A gentleman rose above the rest in the pit, and demanded, 'Why Mr. Mathews omitted the latter part, and by what authority he was prevented from giving the imitation of the learned judge?' This was followed by loud cries from the rest of the audience of 'Answer the question.' Mr. Mathews inquired of his interrogator what learned judge he meant? The gentleman declined giving the name; but another nearer to the stage contrived in a low voice to pronounce

the one alluded to. Mr. Mathews then again addressed the audience. He assured them that in any imitation of his, it was neither his practice nor purpose to hurt the feelings of any individual. He had heard that a noble and learned lord was much offended in consequence of the accounts in the public papers. (Here a general cry of 'No, no !') Mr. Mathews said 'That he did not feel himself bound to a repetition of any peculiar manner, which might be liable to public misconstruction ; he had heard with deep concern that offence had been taken at the mode of his burlesque representation of a judicial address, from an idea that it had a personal allusion, which he disclaimed. He bore the highest respect for the constituted authorities of his country, and therefore no power on earth should compel him to a continuance of any mode of representation that might, if he knew it, favour the erroneous opinion which had gone forth on this occasion. As to the words of the judicial charge, they were strictly those of the author ; but for the tones in which they had first been uttered, he really felt quite at a loss what to say ; he had practised so many voices in the course of his life, that he was not always aware which he might have used for any particular case when it was over. But as the audience seemed to have a favourite, he was willing to prove his anxiety to please them, and would, if they sanctioned the experiment, give the speech in question in various tones and difference of style, which might enable them to point out from amongst the many that which they preferred.' This adroit address created great applause."

Another theatrical limner was George Dance. The Dances were in truth an extraordinary family for talent. There was George the architect, who built the Mansion House ; his son, who built Newgate ; George, an actor ; Nathaniel, a distinguished naval officer ; and Charles, a prolific dramatist collaborator, with Planché and a familiar member of the Garrick Club, where he was long recollected. He wrote innumerable farces and burlesques, most of which enjoyed considerable success. There is nowadays a dramatic writer of this name, no doubt one of the family. Another

of the family was Holland Dance, afterwards knighted. He was born in 1735, and lived till the year 1811. He was said to have conceived a romantic, but unrequited, attachment for the fascinating Angelica Kauffman. It is not common to find a painter a Member of Parliament, as he was. His talents in this way were more than



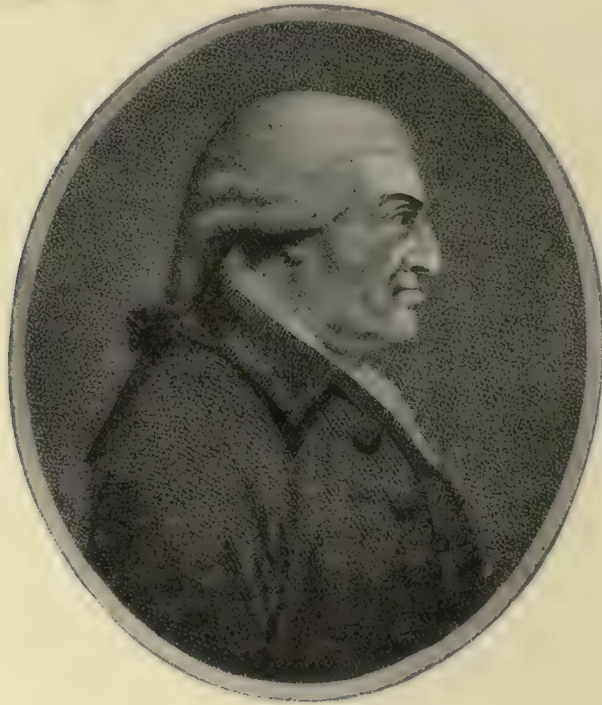
GEORGE DANCE, R.A.

From a portrait by himself in the possession of Mr. H. Spielmann, Esq.

respectable, but he is best known by the engraving from his picture of Garrick in "Richard III.," depicted as starting from his couch when exclaiming, "My horse! My horse!" according to the Cibberian version. As I have stated, a copy of this picture is here, done by Morland the elder. The work is valuable as showing Garrick's

method. Horror and terror are well expressed, and the attitude is a striking one.

This large, rugged, much gnarled face, hung up high near the door of the Drawing-room, is that of Macklin. Ill-temper and harshness are present here, and we can understand the jest—"Sir, by the



MACKLIN.

lines, I mean by the *cordage*, of your face," &c. That face must have been admirably suited to his own creation of Sir Pertinax, and there is a sort of likeness between it and that of our own Phelps, also celebrated in the character. It is the work of Opie, and is said to have been painted just before the actor's death, which is unlikely, as he hardly looks like a centenarian, which he all but was.

One of the most interesting things associated with the collection is that we are constantly recognising the original drawing or painting of some familiar engraving—particularly in the case of John Kemble and his gifted sister. The Kembles are indeed strongly represented here, and we can recognise the various mutations of the speaking face



MRS. SIDDONS.

of the great Sarah at different periods of her life. As she grew old, the strongly marked nose and chin developed almost on Hebrew lines. In the Dining-room is a fine, pretentious full length of her on a heroic scale—the massive face uplifted in a moment of inspiration the figure classic and powerful—though the effect of the whole is a little coarse. This is the work of Westall, and is a recent

addition. It is the gift of Sir Squire Bancroft.¹ In the Drawing-room there is a finely-finished little cabinet picture of the actress in the sleep-walking scene, highly ghostly, and with the chin swathed after the fashion of a nun's head-gear. The powerful face, joined with this sort of night-dress, must have been most impressive. It may be forgotten that in those days the stage was but imperfectly lit, so that these white robes stood out with much more effect. The picture has been reproduced in Terry's collection, a good and effective specimen of the art of colour-printing. It is, indeed, perhaps the best presentment we have of the actors of the time in striking situations, and brings a high price. Sir Thomas Lawrence, a sort of general admirer of the whole Kemble family, was rather a gay "flirt," and paid much attention to one of the sisters whom it was expected he would have espoused, but transferred his devotion to her sister, and the young lady, it was thought, pined away in consequence. The family considered that she had been treated badly.

The most impressive, as well as interesting, likeness of Great John is Lawrence's pencil drawing that hangs over the chimney-piece. Every one must be struck by the beautiful contour of his features and the sad, reposeful expression.

The small picture of Kemble, as Cato, seated on a chair in his white Roman robes, is well known from the large mezzotint. He is repeating that schoolboy's "spouting piece," "It must be so, Plato, thou reasonest well." With his bare legs and short petticoat, he looks more like a Highlander going to bed than that noble Roman, John Kemble. There is a pedagoguelike commonness about the face. A pleasing story is told of Sir Thomas Lawrence's good-nature in connection with this picture. Lord Blessington had promised Mathews the loan of it for engraving, but it could not be got

¹ Sir Squire has been very generous to the Club, and we find his donations in various rooms. To one alone we might take exception—the portrait of Richard Brinsley Sheridan, which is surely a "putative" resemblance. There is little in the face or figure recalling the wit. In the Guest-room there are marble busts of the donor and his wife, by Prince Gleichen.

from the artist, who detained it for months, and years even, until the actor was offended. At last he was sent for to the studio, and there was shown this reduced copy of the larger picture. I fancy it was done by one of Lawrence's pupils, and touched over by



JOHN KEMBLE.

him, for it is very hard and staring in treatment and has little of the juicy softness of the master.

Another truly original character of the time whose, humours are as enjoyable for us as though we had known him in the flesh, was Robert Elliston, the inimitable light comedian and irresponsible *viveur*, free-liver, gambler, joker, lover, manager, actor, egotist—everything ; and who can forget the immortal sketch of him by his friend

Elia? really as amusing and interesting as a scene in one of Congreve's comedies, or a page from Fielding. He indeed strongly



R. W. ELLISTON.

After the sketch by Harlowe in the Garrick Club.

suggested the delightful ease and gaiety of Tom Jones. If we pause before Harlowe's brilliant crayon sketch of him, we can imagine

all these things—and call him up before us. His genial and very congenial biographer, Raymond, furnishes a vast store of the quips and humours of this strange being.

John Kemble figures pleasantly in the Mathews "Memoirs"—his solemnities in private life being well brought out. It always seemed to me that sufficient credit has not been given to the affectionate wife, the devoted Mrs. Anne Mathews, a painstaking *Hausfrau*, for her share in this account of her husband. Bentley the publisher very



MRS. ANNE MATHEWS.

liberally gave her £500 for his papers and another £500 to Hook to put in order or "edit" them, but the improvident wit gave up his task, which was then transferred to Mrs. Mathews, who for £100 more, furnished the four volumes of pleasant reading which form the "Memoirs." Poor lady, she wanted it badly, for the lively Charles left his affairs in a sad condition, but not from too great extravagance. The truth was everything was against him—shattered health, the times, the elements even, and many other things. Mrs. Mathews,

whose portrait is here, had really a delightful humour of her own, particularly in telling a droll story which she put in a sort of high comedy form. Some of the incidents with actors could not really be related better, or perhaps so well. Witness that capital scene of John Kemble and his cat, at which she was not present ; but she tells it with a dramatic animation as though she had been. She of course was recalling her husband's minute description. As it is a good and interesting sketch of the great John in his social moments, I will give it here.

They had both, John and Mathews, been dining at Charles Kemble's, and the great John in one of his agreeable fits of inebriety, when he still contrived to maintain his Roman dignity, had insisted on bringing him home with him, expatiating the while on favourite passages of the bard. "A tray was brought in with wine and water, &c., and with it entered an enormous cat, decorated with a red collar and a bell. The appearance of his favourite cat called forth its master's most affectionate notice, and many relations of its extraordinary powers of understanding, its devoted attachment to its master's person, &c., were detailed to Mr. Mathews. *Mustapha*, Mr. Kemble declared, had much of human feeling of the best kind in his composition ; he described how he watched his return home, mourned his absence ; he grew maudlin in its praise. The animal seemed, indeed, happy in its master's presence ; and it looked up in his face as it composedly lay down before him. Mr. Mathews mewed : Mr. Kemble, turning round at this sound, which he believed to proceed from the cat, observed, 'There, my dear Mathews, do you hear *that* ? Now that creature knows all I say of him, and is replying to it.' This amused my husband, and he repeated the experiment in all the varieties of feline intonation, mewing, purring, &c. Mr. Kemble, at last, said to him, in his slow and measured tones : 'Now, you don't know what he means by *that*, but I *do*. Mus. !—Mus. !' (on every reiteration of this affectionate diminutive, raising his voice to its most tragic expression of tenderness)—'umph ! My dear sir, that creature *knows* that it is beyond my usual time of sitting up, and

he's uneasy ! Mus. ! Mus. !'—but *Mus.* was sleepy and inattentive, and his master resumed his criticisms upon the different readings of Shakespeare, talked also of Lope de Vega, and was again interrupted by a *mew*, as he believed, from the dissatisfied *Mus.* 'What,' asked his fond master, looking down upon him, 'what is it you desire, my good friend ?' (*Mus.*, alias Mathews, mewed once more, in a more supplicating and more touching tone.) 'Well, well ! I understand you : you want to go to bed. Well, I suppose I must indulge you.' Here Mr. Kemble deliberately arose, put down his book upon the table, with its face open at the page to which he had referred, took a measured pinch of snuff, and somewhat tottered to the door, which he with difficulty opened. He then awaited Mustapha's exit ; but Mustapha having no *voice* in the affair, preferred remaining where he was ; and his master kindly reproached him with being a '*little capricious* in first asking to go, and then preferring to stay.' With a smile and look at my husband of the gentlest indulgence towards his favourite's humour, he tottered back again to his chair, resumed his declamatory observations upon the relative powers of dramatic writers, and their essential requisites, till the troublesome Mustapha again renewed his mewing solicitations. Mr. Kemble once more stopped, and looking again at the imaginary cause of his interruption with philosophic patience, asked : 'Well, *Mus.*, what would you have ?' Then, after another pause, turning to his guest, said : 'Now, my dear Mathews, you are fond of animals, and ought to know this one ; he's a perfect character for you to study. Now, sir, *that cat* knows that I shall be ill to-morrow, and he's uneasy at my sitting up.' Then benevolently looking at the cat, added—'Umph !—my dear *Mus.* I must beg your indulgence, my good friend ; I really can-*not* go to bed yet.' *Mus.* whined his reply, and his master declared that the cat asked to be allowed to go away. On the door being a second time opened, after similar exertion on Mr. Kemble's part to effect this courtesy, and several grave chirpings in order to entice *Mus.* from the fireplace, the animal at length left the room. Mr. Kemble then returned, as before, to his seat, drank another glass of wine and water,

and, just as he was comfortably re-established, the incorrigible *Mus.* was heard in the passage again, in loud lament, and importunate demand for readmittance. 'Umph !' said Mr. Kemble, with another pinch of snuff—'now, *that* animal, sir, is not happy, after all, away from me.' (*Mus.* was louder than ever at this moment.) 'Why, what ails the creature ? Surely, there is more in this than we dream of, Mathews. You, who have studied such beings, ought to be able to explain.' Poor *Mus.* made another pathetic appeal for re-admission, and his master's heart was not made of flint. Mr. Kemble apologised to his guest for these repeated interruptions, and managed once more to make his way to the door. After opening it, and waiting a minute for the re-entrance of his favourite, but not seeing it, he smiled at my husband with the same indulgent expression as before, and remarked, 'Now, would you believe it, Mathews, that *extraordinary* animal was affronted at not being let in again on his first appeal ?—and now it is his humour not to come at all ! *Mus ! —Musta-pha !—Mus. !*' But as no *Mus.* appeared, the door was closed with the same deliberation, and Mr. Kemble once more contrived to regain his chair, and recommenced his comments, quite unobservant of the almost hysterical fit of laughter to which my husband was by this time reduced, at the imposition he had so successfully, though in the first place so unintentionally, practised upon the credulity of his grave and unsuspecting friend. But it did not end here ; for Mr. Mathews reiterated his imitations, and Mr. Kemble again remarked upon his favourite's peculiarities of temper, &c.—again went to the door—again returned, till even 'Mr. Midnight' (as some friends of ours christened Mr. Mathews, from his love of late hours) felt it time to retire, and leave Mr. Kemble, which he did as he saw him fall asleep, in the act of representing his idea of the scene of the sick king in 'Henry IV.'—with his pocket-handkerchief spread over his head as a substitute for the characteristic drapery of the dying monarch."

Here at the head of the stairs is Charles Kemble as "Macbeth," giving us an idea of the old declamatory, "striding" or strident

style, of declaiming an heroic character. It was painted, by Kearsley a young artist, who presently became deranged and spent his life in an asylum. This attitude of "strut" is often significant of much more ; usually "worse remains behind." This, however, was hardly in Charles Kemble's line. I have heard two aged persons expatiate on this famous performer until their tongues "grew wanton in his praise."



CHARLES KEMBLE.

These were Planché who, as he told me, recollected the illuminations for the peace of 1802 ; and good old "Papa" Fladgate. Planché used rapturously to describe what he called the "chivalric" (emphasis on *val*) air and bearing of the actor, his youthful impetuous and most irresistible manner, which carried away every listener. He would come bounding on the stage, with a splendid nobility. It was

delightful to hear the old man, not merely describing him, but imitating him, the tones of his voice, his gestures; and though "Papa's" own tones were feeble and quavering enough, his enthusiasm carried him over all defects. I seemed to see the gallant Charles moving before me. How often do I regret that I had not artfully led him on to revive other figures! There is a really powerful head of Charles Kemble, finely cut and delicately wrought, and placed at the top of the stairs *vis-à-vis* to the more earthy Thackeray. Who it is really by I cannot undertake to say; it might be Behnes' work, but there is no artist's name cut on it. It was presented to the Club in 1886, by Mr. Edward Sartoris.

CHAPTER VII

CIBBER—DOWTON—AND HENDERSON



ONE must always take particular delight in a masterly portrait which hangs in the Dining-room, which, though painted with sincerity, conveys all the airy coxcombry of the most amusing of Cibber's characters. It is really a first-rate work, the superciliousness and air of perfect good company is delicately and naturally conveyed, and the light of expression admirably given. The workmanship must give pleasure from its finish. Grisoni, the painter, was one of the many foreigners who found their way to England and made their fortune. He came from Florence, and his pictures show the smooth grace of his country. He was a book illustrator also. Disgusted at being neglected, he returned to his own land, where he died in 1769.

The portrait represents Cibber in his character of Lord Fop-pington in "The Relapse"; most likely when uttering, or about to utter his amusing asservation "*Stap my vitals!*" Mathews, however, quotes the passage from Act III., "I would not be in eclipse another day though I had as many wounds in my body as I had in my heart." What clever beings there used to be then! For Cibber was not only the author of the brilliant "Apology"—the best account of actors that we have, a perfect classic, in its way—but a writer of admirable

comedies, a manager, a poet laureate, a good actor too ! Yet he does not look a mere "clever fellow," such is his air of distinction.

This delightful picture has an additional attraction in having at one time hung in Addison's house, at whose sale it was purchased by Ireland, father of the notorious forger. "It presents the hero of the Apology," a pleasant critic adds, "as if nothing had ever happened to



COLLEY CIBBER.

him, or *could* happen, to disturb his infinite ease and self-satisfaction. He is taking snuff as usual, the only one among his impertinences which he ought not to have practised ; for snuff is one of the means that we use for currying favour with ourselves." Any one looking at the picture will admit the justice of this happy criticism.

Charles Incledon, the famous operatic and ballad-singer, is amus-

ingly figured in Mathew's "Memoirs." There was a simplicity about him which laid him open to many "hoaxes." Once in a shop he was prevailed on to buy a medallion made of mastic or some such preparation—which he was gravely told by the wags, was "the Jubilee Lozenge"—an infallible restorative for the voice. He was induced to keep it in his mouth all day long steadily "sucking" it, until he became quite ill. Kemble solemnly assured him it would be

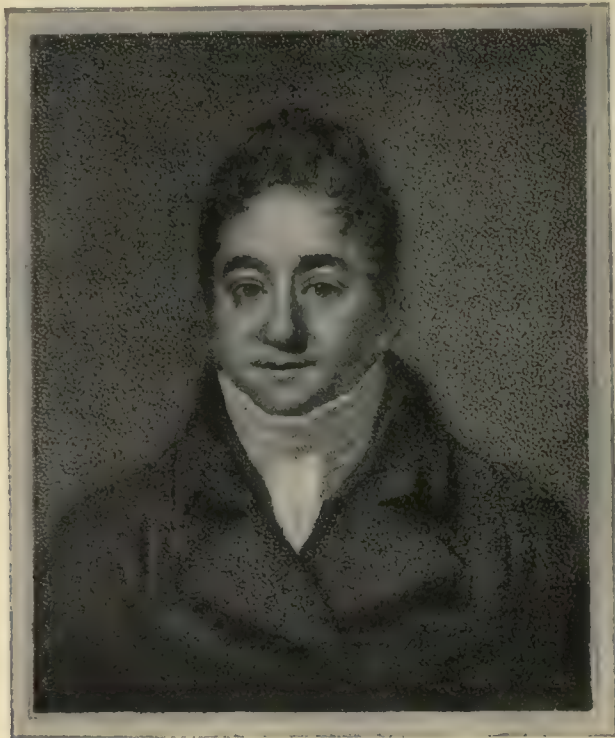


INCLEDON.

of no avail unless he kept it in his mouth all night long ! The height of the jest was reached when an advertisement (specially printed) was shown him warning the public against purchasing Jubilee Lozenges, which was the device of certain unprincipled persons for destroying the voice of public singers and thus opening the way to rivals. Poor Incledon nearly fainted with horror. Once, in a country town, he was at a loss where to find a fitting costume for the part of a quaker which he was to play that night. Walking along he saw a worthy

tradesman in the garb of a "Friend" standing at his shop-door. Incledon accosted and actually persuaded him to lend him his best suit, and even to attend the performance !

Dowton, that admirable actor and comedian of the "old school," had a certain simplicity of a distinct sort which his brethren were very



DOWTON.

fond of playing on—notably Russell, the unique performer of Jerry Sneak. Russell's system was to excite his anger by a calm contradiction of any obvious statement, and though this might be done a dozen times the unsuspecting Dowton was so confident in the faith and sincerity of his friend that he never could suppose that the doubt was pretended.

As Mrs. Mathews, who had an acute power of analysing character says, "Dowton in his upright simplicity met this contrariety with honest rejoinder and an uneven attempt at sustaining his own position, which only drew upon him a fresh difficulty and ended in a complete failure." When Russell invariably offered to back his opinion by a wager of five pounds, Dowton was completely thrown off his centre.

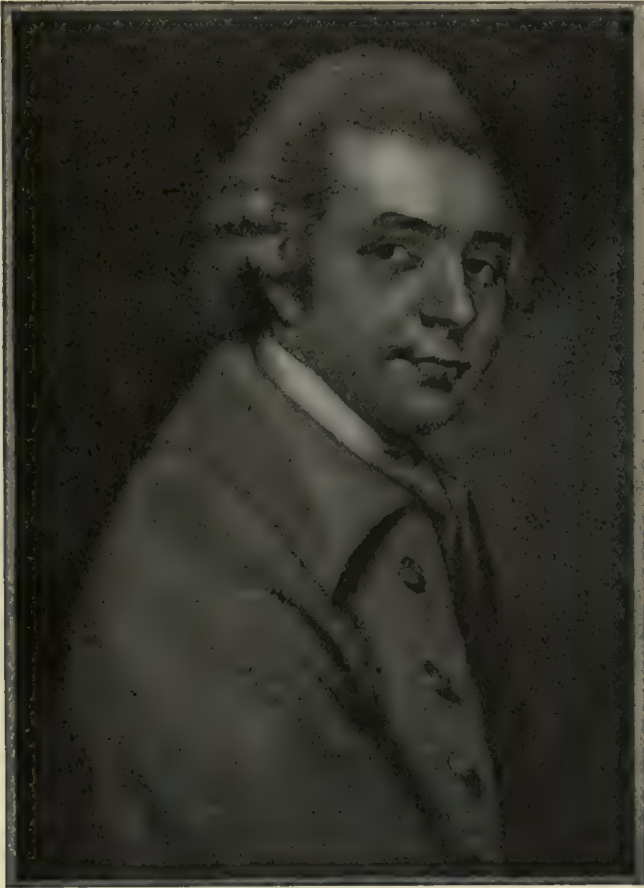


RUSSELL.

Once Mathews, Dowton, and Russell went down to Rochester to play at the little theatre for Mrs. Dowton, when, as may be imagined, the two wags, lightened the road with many a hoax upon their friend. Dowton, who was fond of mechanics, at one stage asked Russell had he ever seen "*a mill with a movable top?*" and that he would see

one presently. Here was a cue for Russell, who in slow, innocent tones began at once his dubitation: "What do you mean, Dowton, by—a—mill—with—a movable top?" "Why, why, of course I mean what I say." "Well, my dear fellow, I never *heard* of such a mill and I go this road as often as you do. I should like to *see* such a mill." "Well then you *shall* see one. Do you think I don't know what I say?" "Yes, my good friend, I do. But you may be mistaken or you may have been imposed upon." Presently the mill came in sight, when Dowton called to the postboy to stop, then he proceeded to explain the mill and its principle how it moved, &c. Russell listened, appeared very interested, when turning round he said, smiling, "My dear Dowton, I conclude you're joking with us all this while. The *top of that mill doesn't move, my dear fellow.*" Poor Dowton flew into a passion. "Not move? Was there ever—are you blind?" "No, I am not *blind*, Dowton, as you know perfectly well, but that top don't move." "Well, let us get out and go up to it, for of all the obstinate, exasperating fellows I ever——" "No, Dowton, I am no more obstinate than you are, but I *won't* get out because I can see perfectly well where I am." And so it went on until the poor fellow was goaded almost into a fever. Returning next day by the same road, Russell began the game again by calling out, with an air of triumph, "Now, Dowton, look. *There's a mill with a movable top!*" "Of course there is, I told you so yesterday, but you would not believe me." "No, no, Dowton," said the other slowly, "you know you said there were *no* mills with movable tops and I said there were." "Why—why—why—" said the baited actor, out of his senses with rage and astonishment, "have you the impudence to tell me this—why I spoke of it first, you know I did." "My dear fellow," said the other gently, "there's no occasion to be in a passion, it won't change the fact that I introduced the matter." "Why—why—why; but you'll swear my life away one of these days. I wanted you to get out and see it move, didn't I? Mathews, was there ever——" "I! oh no, pardon me, my dear Dowton; it's a matter not worth our quarrelling about, but it was you, you know who refused to get out and look at it.

I told you I had often seen it in company with the man who made it and knew exactly how it was constructed." The unfortunate actor,



JOHN HENDERSON.

transported beyond himself at this audacious statement, insisted on the chaise being stopped, and declared that he would walk to town.

Here again we find William Farren as Orestes in "The Distressed

Mother." He died in 1795. This was the father of the well-known "Old Farren." It is rare that we find grandfather, father, and son, all highly distinguished in their profession. "Old Farren," whom some of us will recall, was a prime comedian. All, however, had effective pathos, when it was called for.

Henderson, like Peg Woffington, seems to be "all over the place." In the Strangers' Room there is a head of him, eminently smug and self-satisfied. He has a book open in his hand and apparently will be glad to read something to us, with just elocution. He seems to have had the rude methods of the conventional player—like Mr. Crummles. On the stairs are two rather amusing pictures of him—in one he is "elocutionising" Polonius; in the other, confronting the witches in a stern and pompous fashion, his bare arms folded and rather recalling the late John Forster in his most magisterial mood. It is really the fact that Hamlet looks more grave and reverend than Polonius—who is quite a juvenile. There is an indescribable air of solemn gravity about Henderson. He seems an elderly man of business or a "K.C." explaining things. We can quite understand from this specimen of what sort were the elocutionist, declaiming Hamlets of those times. Henderson was also painted by Gainsborough, and the work is here.

CHAPTER VIII

THE OLDER ACTORS AND OTHERS



INTERESTING are the busts in the Hall—said to be the work of the incomparable Siddons, who at one time devoted herself to modelling under the teaching of her friend, the Hon. Mrs. Damer, a very skilled amateur—witness her sculptures on the arches of Henley Bridge. There is also a full-length statue by her in the Statue Gallery of the British Museum. It must be said, however, that the great actress was not a very striking pupil in this art, for there is the usual amateur weakness and *tenuity* displayed, owing to the lack of anatomical knowledge. As we enter the Hall her performance, which is a likeness of herself, is the first object that greets us. Still it is a likeness and sufficiently recognisable. It was presented by the facetious “Tommy” Hill. Facing it is one of Malibran by another amateur De Beriot, presumably her husband. We are told that Mrs. Siddons also attempted a bust of her great brother which, however, is not shown. There is a bust, too, of Elliston, one of Macready, and one of that clever being, Sir Charles Young, to whom success came almost too late to profit by.

A rather ludicrous scene is the one from “Cymbeline,” in which Palmer and Reddish are engaged in conflict. It is on the wall as we ascend the stair. It is for all the world like the encounter of Mr.

Crummles' two sons. Reddish, looking grotesque enough and a regular "barn-stormer," is down on one knee, while the other has his sword in the air ready to descend.

A most interesting department is a number of portraits of the earliest actors—archaic productions by contemporary artists. These are of extraordinary value and scarcity. They show us the performer under the theatrical conditions of his day. Here is the portrait of Nat Lee—the mad poet and actor, which was painted by Dobson when the poor distraught bard was actually in confinement at Bedlam! He was found dead in the street in 1690, having been stifled in a snow-storm. He was buried at St. Clement Danes.

Here is Cave Underhill who played with Betterton so far back as 1659—a name familiar to readers of Downes and other early chroniclers of the stage. The picture, which is by Ring, represents him in the character of Obadiah, in "The Committee." Another interesting antique is the portrait of Antony Leigh as "Father Dominic" in "The Spanish Friar." This is by, or said to be by, Sir Godfrey Kneller. Leigh died in 1692. He was greatly admired and liked by King Charles II., who would call him his actor, and no doubt it was owing to this partiality that the Court Painter undertook him.

But one of the most remarkable pictures here is that of John Lacy represented in three characters, remarkable—like Charles Mathews—because painted by a contemporary artist, Michael Wright, so far back as 1675. It is a copy by the artist from his original picture now at Windsor. On the back is this inscription: "John Lacy, one of his Majesty's Comedians, representing Parson Scruple in 'The Cheat,' Sandy in 'The Taming the Shrew,' and Monsieur de Vice in 'The Country Captain.' M. Wright pinxt 1675." This therefore must be one of the oldest theatrical portraits in existence, and is certainly a great curio.

This odd-looking group professes to be Betterton and Mrs. Barry (the first and more brilliant) in "Hamlet." He sees his father's ghost. The costume is quaint enough: he in a full Georgian wig, she

in the scarlet dress and petticoat of a lady of quality. He is striving to look solemn and awestricken. It may be a guess that has attached these names to the figures. It is, however, an interesting picture.

An astonishing sight—and vividly painted—is the large collection of water-colours representing the younger Mathews in



THOMAS BETTERTON.

nearly all his characters. These are hung together in one of the passages, and in their free, gay style are curious memorials of the actors' dress in the 'thirties and 'forties. There are nearly a hundred of them. On the stairs leading to the Committee-room is another collection—water-colours also—by the indefatigable De Wilde,

portraying the chief performers of his day in their favourite characters. These are full of spirit and variety. Some no doubt are the originals of the well-known, capital series of steel plates in *Bell's British Theatre*, now so much "slaughtered" for "Grangerising." De Wilde must have done thousands of these theatrical portraitures.

Another of the theatrical portrait painters was one "Gainsborough Dupont," who has painted Quick as "Little Spado," in "The Castle of Andalusia," a pleasant character: "Don't hurt little Spado." O'Keefe, who wrote this once popular piece, gives us an interesting reminiscence referring to this very portrait. "About this time my old friend Quick brought me to see Gainsborough Dupont, the portrait painter, at his house in London Street. Mr. Harris had employed him to paint, for himself, the principal performers of Covent Garden Theatre, in their most distinguished characters. In the front room were many portraits in different states of forwardness. The Right Hon. William Pitt was on the easel; Governor Hastings standing on the floor; and against the wall Quick, in Spado, with his little pistol, which he calls his barrel-organ, in his hand. On the door of the back drawing-room opening, I was surprised, and a little shocked, to see the room darkened (daylight shut out), and lighted by a large lamp hanging from the centre of the ceiling: there stood a man half naked, a ghastly figure, with a blanket round him, staring wildly, holding a pole in his stretched-out hand." This was Holman, as "Mad Tom," in "King Lear." This last picture is also here. Gainsborough Dupont was the son of the great painter.

Quick must have been a richly comic actor. The least glance at the portraits of him in Spado and Tony Lumpkin will convince any one of his extraordinary humour. In the latter painting, by De Wilde, he is represented reading the letter, and the look of puzzlement with which he tries to find out whether it is "an x or an izzard" is true to the life. That admirable comedian Liston was wont to provoke roars of laughter in this character; but Quick's squat figure was of much service to him in such parts as this, and in testy old men. When Quick played nine nights at Windsor in 1796, his Majesty commanded

six of them. The monarch, at a later period, took an equal fancy for Joe Grimaldi, the clown; and laughed almost to suffocation at his mimic exhibition of swallowing a quantity of long puddings. In this collection of about one hundred drawings, one is struck by the everyday homeliness of the faces, which seem like those we meet in



A. POPE.

a common crowd. They seem the actors' *own* faces. It is evident from this that at that time there was no "making up" as it is called, which would be considered only a sort of disguise, and a powerful hindrance to expression.

Here is Alexander Pope as King Henry VIII.—a very "safe" sterling actor, who at one time enjoyed a high reputation. His father

did him a service by giving him the poet's Christian name. It sounds curiously to hear of a modern Alexander Pope, but there are many instances of such nomenclature. It is always an element of interest, as in the case of a member of one of the leading clubs, who was called "George Herbert"—a name that revives the memory of the devotional poet of whose family he comes. Pope was as much gourmand as actor, also a good portrait painter, and his overpowering taste for the good things of the table, his agonies at a culinary disappointment, laid him open to endless jests and tricks of his friends. Thus he would be asked to dinner where the earlier courses were of the plainest and coarsest kind, and when he had been compelled to fill himself with these, a train of exquisitely dressed dishes would be introduced. Once he was asked to partake of a splendid haunch, and it was artfully contrived that he should carve it for the whole company. As the company was large he had to carve and carve until the whole was gone save the bone. All that was left for him were some poor shreds and scrapings. The joke was hugely enjoyed by his friends. But Mrs. Pope presently was heard to murmur from the foot of the table that "she really did not care for venison and that Mr. Pope might have her portion." Then it was discovered that the artful fellow had piled her plate with all the very choicest morsels. The laugh was on his side.

Mrs. Pope—the first Mrs. Pope, not the heroine of the venison story—had been one of Garrick's great heroines as Miss Younge. He brought her forward against Mrs. Barry. She was a fine performer, but her complaints—she was jealous and worrying—helped to drive him from the stage. In the "Correspondence," we have their letters which show his patience and good-nature.

A portrait quaintly labelled "James Anderson, Tragedian," gives us a glimpse of what is called "early Victorian" style in theatricals. There was at this period a sad conventionality abroad—dress, style, everything being paltry, cumbrous, and imperfect. It is like the costume in "Pickwick." Here we have our hero "discharging" Ion—Talfourd's hero—Talfourd, friend of "Boz," of Forster, and many

more. It is an extraordinary portrait of the young Grecian, his neck, shoulders and arms being *literally* bare, with short petticoats, long hair and a rather antique physiognomy for the son of Adrastus. His robust arms are well squared, the muscles have a very Sandow-like



J. ANDERSON.

development. Altogether poor Anderson, who was long a pillar of the Garrick Club, is made as unpoetical as can be. He was one of the "good old school," of the good old Early or Middle Victorian times.

In her portrait by Masquerier, the once admired Mrs. Billington is shown as a stout and rosy and unctuous singer, with fine stamina for producing her notes. It is well painted and expressive, and gives a good idea of the lady's "opulent charms."

Lewis must have been a truly vivacious comedian. He is brightness and animation itself, as we see him, at full length in the National



MRS. BILLINGTON.

From the original in the Garrick Club.

Gallery by Shee. Here he is again grown old and "port-winey," well "wiggged," with the benevolence of old age, and by the same artist, who knew him well. And here he is once more, with his rosy, expressive face full of animation, hung in the Drawing-room. As he was standing once by the side-scenes, a waggish actress employed herself in sticking pins into one of his false calves. When she had satisfied her whim,

much to the amusement of the bystanders, she tapped him on the shoulder, and said, "Why, Lewis, somebody has been making a pin-cushion of your leg." Though the lady had been occupied some minutes in this pastime, Lewis affected to draw up his leg in agony, and swore he felt the pain.

There was published a coloured picture of Harley as the Strange



LEWIS.

Gentleman in Dickens's farce, which shows the ridiculous exaggeration of farce costume in those days. Even Buckstone and Wright used to dress as perfect Merry Andrews, in blue trousers, striped coats, &c.

A pleasing, sketchy little full-length painting, with a sort of Watteau effect, is that of Mrs. Abington, in a garden, her dress encircled by a garland of flowers. It is by Heilbeg and gives an

excellent idea of her traditional features, a pert girlish face. Immediately below is old "Bob Keeley"—rubicund of face, somewhat like old Joey Bagstock and rotund of person. It is by O'Neil, R.A., whose style of painting, heavy and rather muddy, makes us wonder how he obtained admission to the Academy. There were then however many worse than he. This picture has some interesting associations.



J. P. HARLEY.

In one of the cases in the Drawing-room is the actor's presentation gold snuff box with an inscription. I have seen an account of his presentation. After the rehearsal of "*The Maid of Honour*," Mr. Charles Kemble invited the performers to meet him in the Green-room. He then appeared before them holding "a superb gold snuff box, with a likeness on the cover in alto-relief of Keeley in '*Harlequin Fat*,' presented the box with many compliments, adding

that it was an acknowledgment for his good-nature in taking the part of 'Harlequin Fat' in the Pantomime and 'the cheerful way,' in which he had done it. The inscription ran: 'To Robert Keeley from the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre, in testimony of his zeal in their



MRS. ABINGTON AS MRS. PINCHWIFE.

service, Jan. 1831.'" Pleasing testimony to the relations of all concerned.

In the Drawing-room is a small cabinet group of a genteel family, representing John Rich the manager, with his wife and children. It is a very pleasing, highly finished picture by Hogarth, who was well

acquainted with his sitter. Rich was one of the early managers and figures in Cibber's "Apology." He was practically the introducer of pantomimes, and the first one he devised was given at Lincoln's Inn Fields in 1717. He himself used to play Harlequin under the name



MRS. YATES.

of Lun. A companion picture, though of much larger size, is that of Powell the actor—once set up as Garrick's rival—also displayed with his family, a rather interesting, well-painted group, the gift of the founder. The child perched upon the wall rather disturbs the symmetry.

In one of the rooms below there is a good "solid" head of

Elliston by Harlowe, recognisable too, but somewhat too coarse in the handling. It lacks the *finesse* and refinement of the same artist's delicate crayon drawing of the actor—hung in the passage. Nothing can exceed the *finesse* of the lines and the expression. It has been exquisitely engraved. The fair hair and white neckcloth are good points of contrast. Here also is a head of Liston.



KITTY CLIVE.

There is some disappointment when we see the larger portraits of famous actresses—such as Mrs. Yates, by Coates, a sound painter; Mrs. Bracegirdle (painter unknown); whose faces are conventional enough and do not suggest good likenesses. This must have often struck the visitor at Hampton Court when looking at the Charles II. beauties, who all seem to wear something of the same face. Mrs. Yates, however, has a certain stateliness such as we

would expect. Playing in the great comedies and "discharging" bright characters imparted a dignity both in bearing and dress. We fear Miss —— and Mrs. ——, whose likenesses are in the shop windows, have not this imposing air, face, dress, and manner, being rather too earthy.



MRS. GARRICK.

From the sketch by Cipriani in the Garrick Club.

The portrait of Kitty Clive in the Dining-room, by Verelst, is an "important" one, and the dealers have it, but it does not take the eye much. The face and figure are too full and comfortable. We look here in vain for the sprightly hoyden who so increased the gaiety of the nation. Mathews consulted Croker about the various likenesses

of the actress, and was told by him that there was a picture of her at Strawberry Hill, by Davidson, and another of her in water-colours as the fine lady in "Lethe." He adds the remark that the first must have been a likeness or it would not have been acceptable to her old friend and neighbour at Twickenham, and given a place in his collection.

Every one is interested in Mrs. Garrick, the faithful companion and devoted assistant of the great actor. There is a charming, graceful sketch of her over the chimney-piece in the Library, wrought airily in pencil and tinted in the most delicate fashion. It is a sketch, but a sketch by that elegant artist, Cipriani. It was done in the heyday of her charms. As the world knows, she was the beautiful Violette, a dancer, and died in 1822, at the surprising age of 105. Of this there can be no doubt, as she was married in 1749, and had then been on the stage some years.

A charming portraitist in the theatrical way was Chalon, R.A., whose work was familiar to many of us in our youth. He was singularly refined in his sketches, and has preserved for us in his way satisfactory likenesses of the great dancers—Duvernay, Cerito, and others. Some of his most striking pieces are of Charles Kean, in "Macbeth" and "The Wife's Secret," in which he contrived to invest that second-rate performer with a good deal of poetry and grace. We have here of him a picture of Charles Mathews, who seems to have been "done" by every artist, as "the old Scotch lady": "I canna vary weel recollect the parteeclar fac, but it's no material to the story."

Here, too, we find a portrait of Madame Vestris by no less a person than the luckless Buss, so well known to all Pickwickians by the "Buss Plates." The artist will go down to posterity with the notoriety of having been "turned out" of "Pickwick." Yet the two original "Buss Plates" are just as celebrated as those retained. He was, after all, a very respectable artist, and distinguished himself in his own line, which was not exactly comedy.

There is a well-painted scene from "King John" by

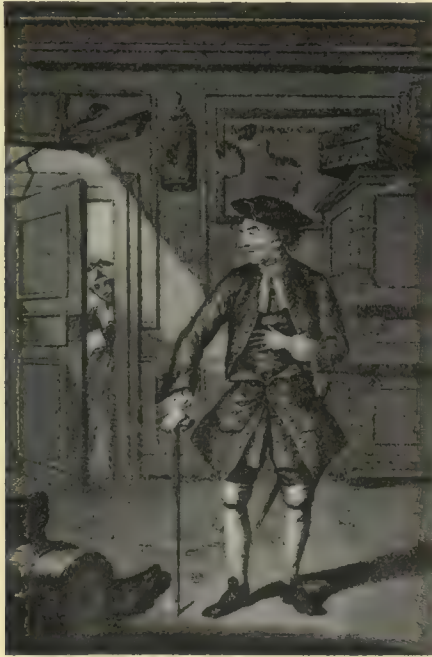
Mortimer, highly "decorative," as the French put it, and which supplies a good notion of how a distressing situation was dealt with



MADAME VESTRIS.

on the boards in the last century. It shows us Bensley the heroic, with his "swell of soul," as Hubert; Powell, the rival of Garrick; and one Smith. The dresses are rich, Italian ones with satins and

velvets, ruffs and trunk hose. This was the conventional guise for persons of high condition and dignity in a Shakespearean play. And effective enough it was and understood of the audience. The agony is shown in face contortions and the arms contracted on the breast, while the attendant characters try and show sympathetic faces. "Reserve forces," as forces, were not then understood—force,

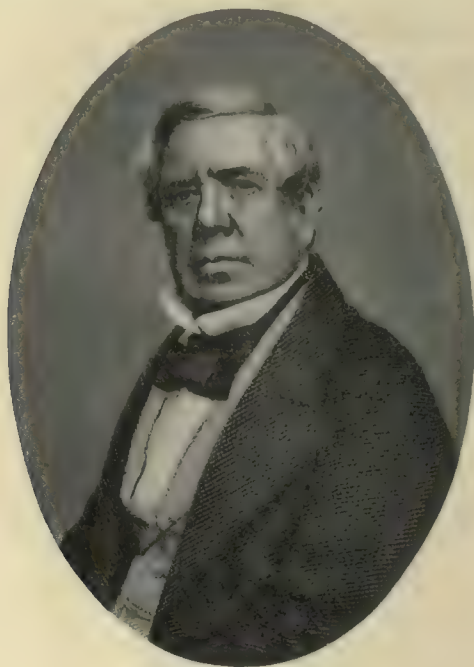


YATES IN THE CHARACTER OF LOVEGOLD.

if not exhibited, was presumed to be non-existent. These old principles of expression were, after all, very *intelligible*, which is a great point.

Seldom have pictures been better used with an eye to decoration than in the large Smoking-room of the Club. It would seem as though the works in question had been specially painted to fill the

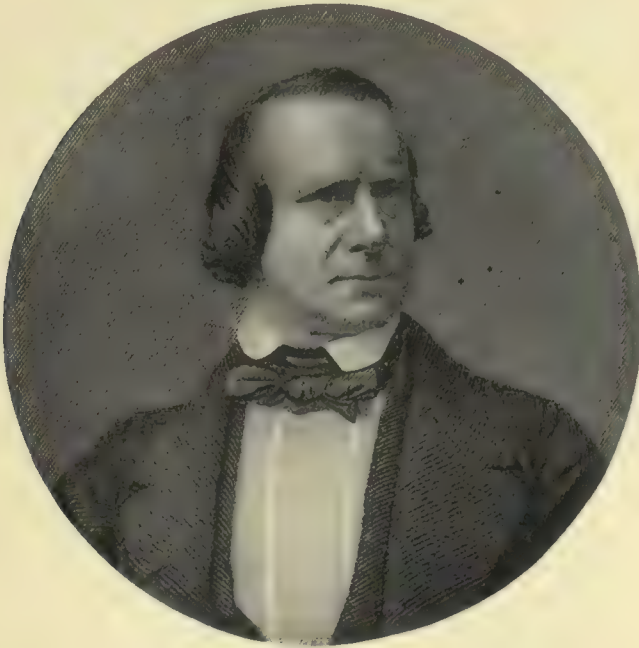
places they occupy. Nothing could be more impressive than the result—the pictures seem impanelled in the walls. On the right as we enter, is a grand scene by David Roberts, R.A., covering a great portion of the space and depicting the "Ruins of Baalbec." The solemnity and melancholy of the whole is striking and dignified. The three stately columns rise in the centre with a solemn air of



DAVID ROBERTS, R.A.

abandonment. On each side are panels by Glasse of eastern scenes. Facing the window is a fine sea-piece, covering a great portion of the wall: "Dutch luggers going out of Monickenden," by Clarkson Stanfield, in the artist's breezy and animated style. His works seem to improve with age, and to acquire an "old master" tone. Over the chimney-piece is another fine work of the same

painter, "The Port of Ancona," whose rich tones and general power will command admiration. To the right and left are two more of David Roberts': "The interior and exterior of a Flemish Inn." These works are all gifts of the respective painters, and are excellent examples of the fine, academic style now unhappily "gone out."

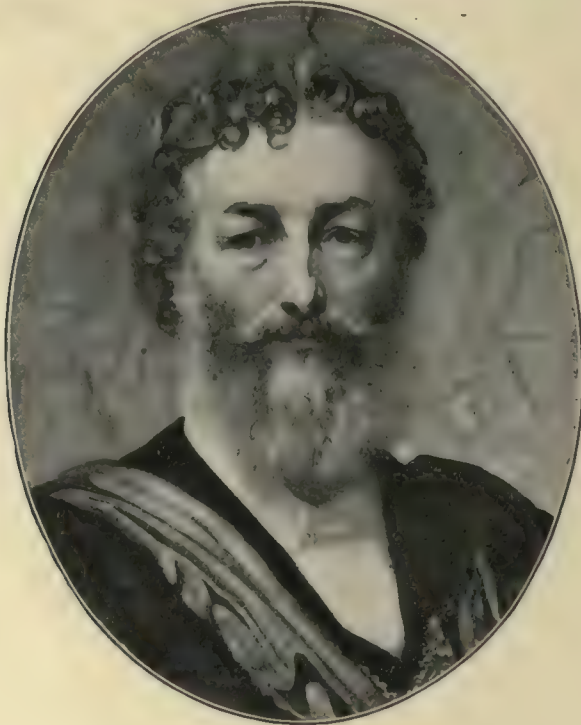


SAMUEL PHELPS.

It must be said that the modern contributions to the gallery are of rather inferior merit and workmanship. Not very much can be said for the showy portrait of Mr. Henry Neville, which covers much wall space on the stair. Here is Phelps as Cardinal Wolsey, the work of that clever amateur artist and well-graced actor, Mr. Forbes Robertson. The likeness is good, and it brings the great actor

perfectly before us, but his face had more force in it and harder lines.

In the Guest-room over the chimney-piece are seen the striking features of a striking and most interesting man and artist—to say nothing of his histrionic gifts—Sir Henry Irving. In the Club we find

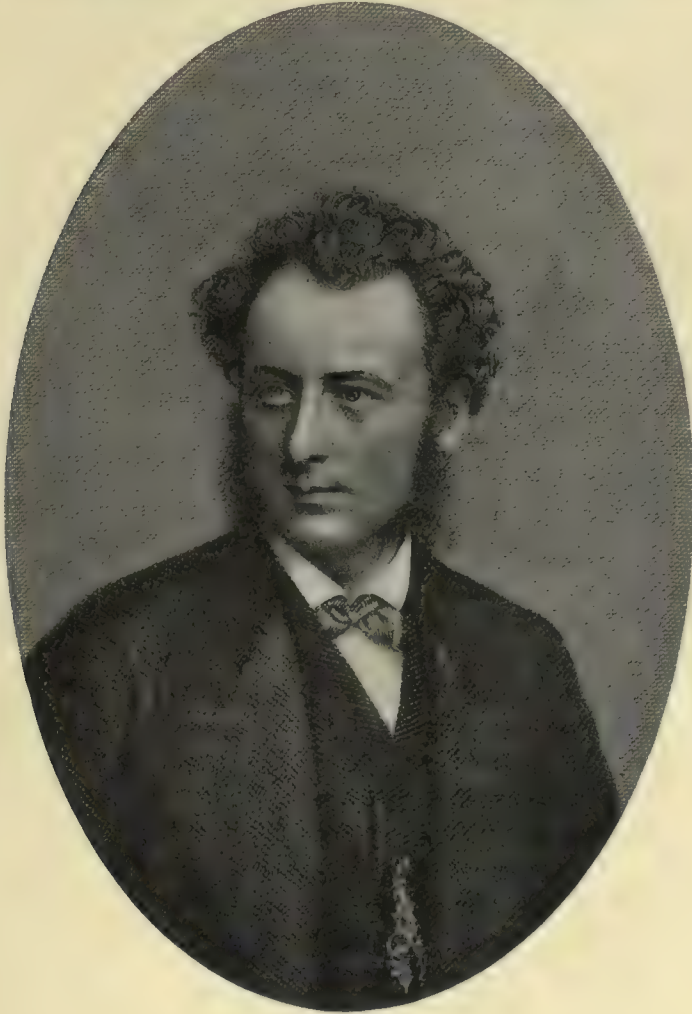


LEIGHTON.

From a painting by himself in Uffizi Gallery.

abundant tokens of his presence and his generosity. On the stairs is a good likeness of the then Prince of Wales, Honorary President of the Society, which our actor had painted for the Club. In the Dining-room, as before noted, is the fine, decorative picture of the scene in Massinger's "New Way." For the portrait of himself he sat to "the late"—alas! that we should say so—Sir John Millais, P.R.A.

This is a fine work of a dreamy, poetical cast, done in profile. The



MILLAIS.

face is scarcely full enough, and indeed the whole effect is rather sketchy, but at the time the great artist had begun to lose some of his

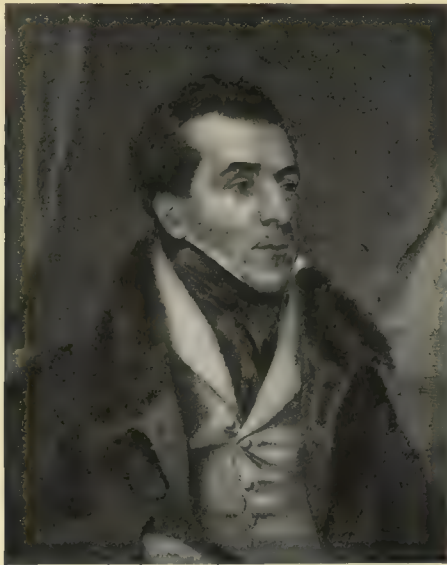
cunning and power. Sir Henry is a familiar denizen of the place. With how many a social meeting has his hospitable nature indulged itself in the Guest-room! We have oft heard the chimes of midnight there. Millais's own portrait is here also—a fair likeness. This suggests that curious "group" picture by O'Neil—a member—which represents a game of pool in the Billiard-room. It is a rather melancholy record, as almost every one depicted is gone. Nearly all are shown as young men, notably Leighton, then handsome and Italian-looking, Millais himself, and many more.

Millais and Leighton! How much the harmless public pleasure—and public graces, too—have been diminished by their loss! What refining, amiable personalities were theirs! What a tone their presence in the world of the arts imparted! Now that they are gone, how mediocre seems what is left. There was a "distinction" about them, notably in the case of Leighton, with a courtesy and consideration—a modesty, too—which, if of the old school, was still more engaging. The last time I saw Sir John at the Athenæum Club, his malady was pressing on him sorely and he could scarcely speak. It was one of his last visits, I think. He asked the waiter for some picture paper which I happened to be reading. When he found it was "in hand," as it is called, he sat down in the window with great patience to wait until it was free. When I saw how it was, I at once gave it to the waiter, on which the invalid came over smiling to beg that I would not deprive myself of it. I could give a dozen instances of Lord Leighton's kindly consideration for all whom he met. I once gave him—very appropriately—one of Reynolds' academic lectures—a presentation copy from the author to Burke, with which he was much pleased. Once I took supper with "Boz" and Millais.

In the Drawing-room there is a very poor portrait of Young the tragedian, which tempts one to exclaim, "What! *this* Young? the rival of Kemble and Kean!" It is the work of Sir Edward Landseer, and depicts the actor as King John with a diadem and a flowing robe and a stage beard. It might be a "super" lord.

We find in the Dining-room the original of that most striking of all the portraits of Garrick, viz., that by Pine, which shows his keen, searching glance and darting eyes at a moment when he was "all alive," interrogating whoever was before him. The throat is open, and he is evidently under a sort of inspiration. It is curious that it is almost more effective in "black and white" than in colours.

Halfway up the stairs are two busts, each of which has a history.



CHARLES YOUNG.

One is of Fechter, the well-known Anglo-French actor, who made a sensation here and had, at first, a meteor-like course; then one that hurried rapidly downwards, till it ended rather disastrously. (He was, by the way, born in Hanway Street, just out of Oxford Street.) We may recall the indignation of the good "stock actors" of the olden school, such as "Jack" Ryder, who could not contain themselves as they talked of the "foreigner" doing Hamlet in broken

English and a flaxen wig! "Boz" took a violent fancy to the interesting Frenchman, and I recall his bringing me with him to the Lyceum one night when "Edgar of Ravenswood" was being played to a thin house. He had a private key which admitted us to the stage, and we stood at the wing watching the actor's love agonies addressed to one of the interesting Leclercqs. Fechter—who, as "Boz" explained to me, always desired to be styled *Feshter*—later, suffered from a strange affection, his chest and stomach swelling violently under strong emotions. "Boz" assured me that he has been near him on the stage when the buttons on his jerkin would fly off into the pit under the tension! The well-known Gads-hill Chalet, now in Lord Darnley's Park, was his gift—a costly present. He was then flush of cash, but in his later days, "he hung like the rusted mail, quite out of fashion" and forgotten. He went to America and had ill success there; was unfortunate in his wedded life; and died, I believe, in disease and distress. Such was the fate of the gay, gallant Fechter, the original hero of the "Dame aux Camélias," and once the lion of Paris and London! The bust here is a very excellent likeness, both showy and pleasing. It is by a well-known French sculptor Carrier, and is one of the life-like works full of spirit and expression. Not distasteful is the smooth ivory or yellow tone imparted to the surface, and which has a better effect than the common chilling white plaster.

On the same landing is a bust of Shakespeare, fashioned into a dandified Italian, something like an Opera singer, the gift of another idol—Salvini—after whom the town "ran horn-mad"—for a time at least. He, too, was to illustrate the sad alternations which attend the player's path. I recall his first performances in that Castle Rackrent Theatre, as it then was—Old Drury—with decayed, make-shift dresses and scenery, and but a slack attendance. But gradually he "caught on," was taken up by "the fashionables," and became the rage. He was presently set up as a rival to the great, popular actor of the day. He was fêted and feasted, and, in the tumult of his grateful feelings, he presented this bust. He went his way and returned the following year with a fairly equipped company, intending now to make his

fortune. But the capricious public had changed its mind, and would not go to see him *at all*, and he had to return home, having lost a vast deal of money !

In this connection, I fancy one of the drollest scenes I ever witnessed was a performance of "King Lear" by Rossi, another great



SALVINI AS OTHELLO.

Italian exotic, in which the "Jack" Ryder aforesaid was cast for Kent. Rossi declaimed in his native tongue, Jack in *his*, and all the other characters in *theirs*. Taking up the "cues," as may be conceived, was all matter of guess work. Any pause furnished a cue, with the result that, in a few minutes, everybody was hopelessly "at sea" or fogged, and merely "spouted" something as their turn came. Poor

Jack's face was a comedy of disgust and rage, but the climax was reached when the Italian broke out in the middle of his speech with "Ai-Eevery-eench a Keeng!"

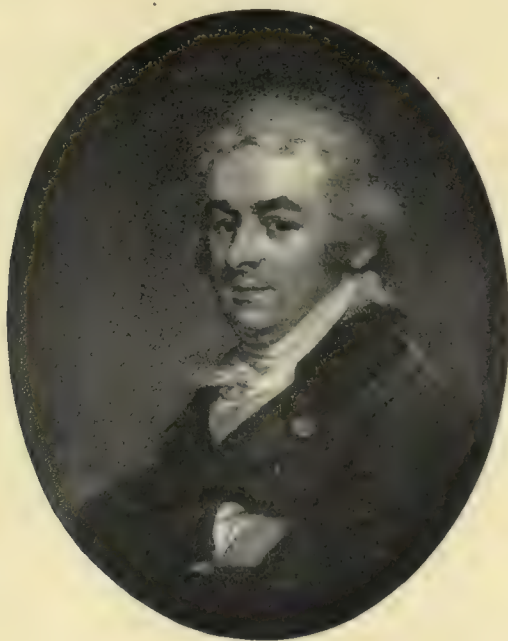
In the Drawing-room we come on the good-humoured face



LYDIA KELLY.

of Lydia Kelly, once in high esteem as a performer. Lydia Kelly is not to be confounded with the sprightly "Fanny" of the same name, who is enshrined in Elia's Essays as "Barbara S.," the pretty tale of the poor child who was paid double in mistake by the stage treasurer, after a struggle with conscience, returned it. There was much dispute

as to Barbara S., one of C. L.'s mystifications ; but my late friend Charles Kent waited on "Fanny," then in her green old age, and heard from her the whole story. To Fanny we owe the pleasant little Royalty Theatre, built in the garden of an old Soho mansion, of which the old chimney-pieces, staircases, and florid ceilings still remain to puzzle the visitors.



BANNISTER.

Clint's portrait of Mathews in the Drawing-room is a fine piece of work. He is shown as "Monsieur Malet," a French refugee, in a suitable costume, cocked hat and greenish surtout. But what earnestness in the pose ! It seems the likeness of a real personage in real life—not one dressed and "in character." What grave expression in the face and attitude ! Truly one of those pictures that are "company," and set you a-thinking. Macklin's gnarled and rugged

features—he seems to snarl at us as we look—contrast with the correct and tranquil lines of Young's face as "King John." There is a solidly painted portrait of Bannister as Steady, in "The Quaker"; and would we see him in waggish humour there is a brilliant pastel, his nose to his cane. Here is Mrs. Mattocks with a luscious low-comedy face—a good-humoured and kind one—exactly suited



ANNE OLDFIELD.

to the friendly *commères* of the drama. There are faces of this kind whose lines, even in their repose, excite feelings of goodwill almost as soon as they appear on the boards. Nowadays all this is lost. The farce is a negligible quantity. There is in this room a small, rather finely modelled face and bust of Mrs. Oldfield; certainly well painted, but beyond a certain speculative guess, who can say that it is the actress?

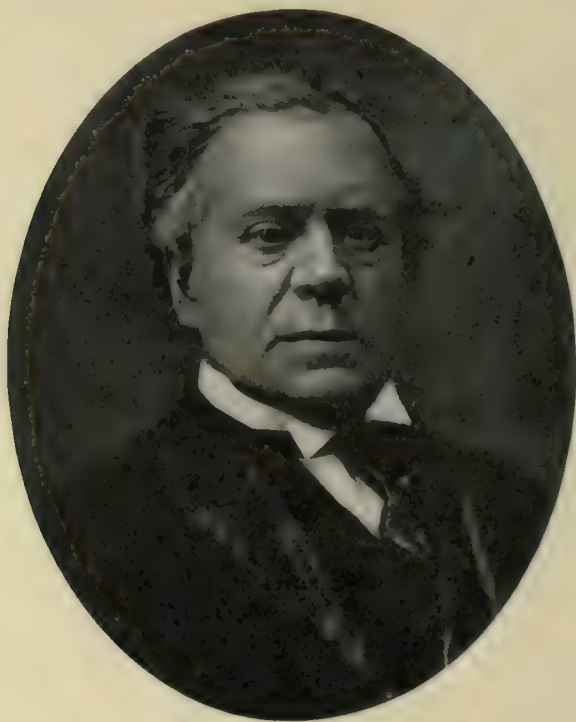
In the Guests' Dining-room, not far away from his friend Irving—a companion portrait, in fact—the genial features of “Johnny” Toole greet us—an excellent likeness, with a hint of his favourite humorous twist in the mouth, as though he were projecting words from its sly corner, much as Buckstone used to do. It is the gift of



MRS. MATTOCKS.

his life-long friend and comrade, Sir Henry, and was painted by Mr. Collier. How the pair have heard the chimes at midnight! What quips and jests have they not contrived together! One of these always seemed to have high merit and humour, and may be classed with those of Hook. It is the story of the trick played upon the old Scotch waiter, when the pair adroitly concealed all the silver plate,

&c., under the table, stripping the room, in fact, then stepping out of the window on to the lawn to watch the result. The old fellow, re-entering, was scared at the robbery, and with loud cries rushed out and raised the house. Then the pair hastily re-entered, arranged everything as it was before, and resumed their smoking, drinking, &c.



J. L. TOOLE.

Enter tumultuously landlord and all his followers—*Tableau!* Every one fell on the poor waiter, who was accused of being always drunk, stupid, and blundering.

The name of Toole suggests that of his life-long friend, Sir Henry Irving, and the early days of his great success, when he was the *one* actor-manager, and when his theatre was the sole house

in London where pieces were "staged" under the most romantic conditions, supreme luxury being regulated by supreme taste. What discussion, heated and other, used there to be on this topic of actor-management! How it was held up as destructive to all "healthy"—that was the word—growth or nourishment of the



SIR H. IRVING.

drama! Now the system is universally accepted, and is really found to be the only one which allows a leading actor to exhibit his powers properly. As we look round us we shall see that every flourishing theatre is under actor-management—that is to say, the attraction of the house is due to the personality of the leading performer, who

moulds everything to his own particular system, and is himself the cynosure. It will be found, I think, that this is the natural social outcome, and also what is best suited to the public taste. Every rising, or risen, player looks therefore to the time when he shall have his own theatre. It would be impossible for him to think of his having a share in a piece with other performers as capable as himself, for the reason that no such pieces are to be found nowadays. Even the Shakespearian plays seem, by treatment and arrangement, to become more and more one and two-part pieces. But what will be the prospect when *every* theatre is in the hands of an actor-manager, and when the popular player, instead of looking for an engagement, as used to be the case, looks out regularly for a theatre ?

I myself hold one of the most wonderful testimonies to Irving's extraordinary success, and which, I believe, is unique in its magnitude. This is a collection which I have long been gathering of every picture and piece of print that has been issued during the past five-and-twenty years. It fills some twenty great folios, and the portraits, scenes, caricatures, &c., amount to many thousands. Every play has its set of illustrations, and it altogether forms one of the most extraordinary collections ever made. Of course, the portraits have not the merit or pretensions of those found in similar collections dealing with Garrick and Kemble, for these are formal engravings from pictures, while the others are the ephemeral sketches prepared for illustrated papers. Still, the Garrick and Kemble likenesses are comparatively limited in number, possibly not exceeding a hundred or so in each case. Many of the early Irving items—those belonging to the seventies—are of extraordinary rarity, in fact unique.

I myself enjoyed the great pleasure of writing a biography of the great actor, whom I have always admired from the first. This account is conceived in an impartial, temperate spirit of criticism, and I was not drawn into the torrent of indiscriminate praise, which at one time was fashionable. Every good actor would, I think, prefer to be measured calmly, and thus his excellences will stand out more effectively.

We expect in "the eminent tragedian" a certain cast of features—ascetic, romantic even, something "mild, pale, and penetrating." Then what a surprise this presentment of the thundering George Frederick Cooke, with the enormous "mutton-chop whiskers," overhanging coal-black wig and eyebrows. Nothing more prosaic, or even *Banker*-like, could be imagined. In those days nobody cared

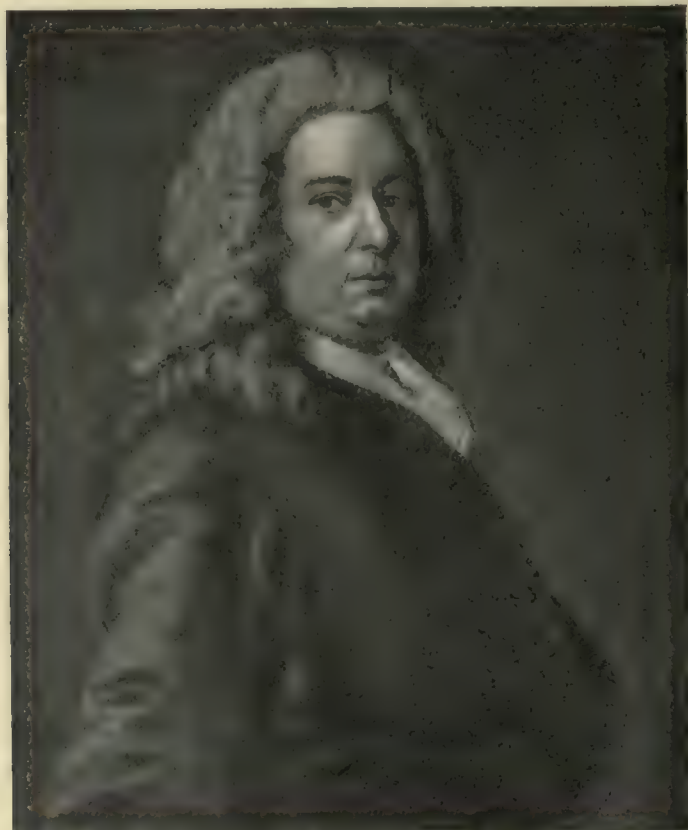


G. F. COOKE.

how the player looked, or what he wore, &c. He is also shown as Shylock—a low, mean-looking, Clerkenwell sort of Jew.

Hogarth, again, is made responsible for a portrait of Quin—a full-faced, jovial-looking person. We may wonder how Mathews contrived to secure these "Hogarths" in such abundance: or did he merely accept the dealer's assertion? Of course, seventy years ago

or so the works of notable painters were more easily "picked up," and picked up for what is called a song. How well painted and how natural this Quin is! Yet there is no speculation—no, nor even



JAMES QUIN.

inspiration—in that face. It is hardly inflamed enough for the sort of *bon vivant* that he has been held out to us.

Recently a portrait of this actor, also by Hogarth, was added to the National Gallery—a splendid specimen of rich and free handling,

bravura, and infinite expression. It is not the same as the Garrick likeness, whose claims therefore one might doubt.

There is in the Drawing-room, close to the window, a very interesting little cabinet picture, highly finished, and representing a benevolent-looking old violinist in the act of drawing music from his instrument. It is the likeness of John Salomons, a professional of reputation, and claims to have been painted by Sir Thomas Lawrence, a claim that might seem to be endorsed, as it was presented by David Roberts. But it could hardly have been painted by Lawrence, as the style shows, which is quite German, and the delicate and minute touchings of the face is not in Lawrence's way. Still he was a member.

The collection of Garrick relics is large and interesting. Here is a chair made out of the boards of the old Drury Lane stage which he had so often trod. This was, of course, from the theatre which he himself had reconstructed under the direction of the brothers Adam. Here, also, is his "stage ring," his "silver ticket" of admission to the Haymarket Theatre, his dress-sword and shoe-buckles, and a set of scales and weights used by him. Of greater interest is the medal worn by him as his badge of office when he was Steward at the Stratford Commemoration in 1769. This adornment figures in many pictures, and he seems to have been rather proud of it, in spite of the ridicule which followed the celebration, chiefly prompted by the jealous Foote. There are also two chairs from his villa at Hampton. There is an amber snuff-box of his which was given by Mrs. Garrick to one Clarke, a solicitor of Bishopsgate, and presented by his son to the Club. Here, also, is Mrs. Garrick's "ivory permit," entitling her to pass through the gates of the Park, then, it seems, a privilege.

The space over the chimney-piece in the Library is filled with a rare and interesting collection of memorials which, at "Christie's," would excite enthusiastic bids, to say nothing of "applause." Here are choice miniatures in a frame, busts, oil paintings, and pencil drawings. The last are of singular interest—two pencilled drawings by Sir Thomas, of John Kemble and his gifted sister. That of Kemble is wonderful for the noble *contour*, the dignity, and noble

Roman scornfulness. The sketch of Mrs. Siddons is not so striking, and shows that sort of homeliness of manner and dress which she seems to have studiously adopted. Then a number of miniatures by Cosway, a very charming sketch of the lovely Miss Eliot the actress, and engraved in the life of Murphy. Here, too, is the quaint and grotesque likeness of Baddeley, also by Cosway; and above them the oil sketch of Garrick, by Zoffany, spoken of before. There is also a goodly number of Edmund Kean. Somewhere in the Club are a number of busts: one of Liston, by Joseph (it is unusual to find one of a comic performer); one of Dr. Kitchener, the Amphytrion, whose notice to his guests over the chimney-piece ran: "Come at seven—go at eleven," wittily altered to "go it at eleven." There is also a bust of the host himself, as he may be styled, *i.e.*, Charles Mathews; one of the sea novelist, Captain Marryat; and one of Sir R. Birnie, the magistrate (*que diable fait-il*, &c.?). There is a bust of Sheridan Knowles, presented by himself; busts of Wallack and Tyrone Power, and Talfourd. A portrait of Talfourd has recently been added.

The Club, it may be suspected, is hardly aware what a treasure—rather what a mine of gold—it possesses in some half a dozen vast atlas folio volumes, stoutly bound, which are laid to their rest in a cabinet and rarely disturbed. These form Mathews' wonderful collection of mezzotint portraits, some in the very finest state, many exceptionally brilliant and rich, because of their being long thus strictly immured and not exposed to the light, or rough treatment. They are really a series of spirited dramas, and many are the engraved versions of pictures upon the walls. This gives a double interest.

In these days such mezzotints have fetched at auction two hundred or even three hundred pounds, according to their state. We hear of a collection being sold consisting of about a score of these impressions, and bringing some three or four thousand pounds. But here there seem to be hundreds of these treasures. But alas! some half-maniac, half-Goth has trimmed them close, cut them to the very quick, leaving no "margins"! Still they are very fine, noble things—luminous, richly black, and in splendid condition. What a treat it

is to turn them over ! What a variety of spirited faces and attitudes ! Many are as good as their originals. What men and women—what faces and bearings, to be done in this fashion by great artists, then to be multiplied in this expensive shape ! Why is not our *corps dramatique* thus honoured ? This collection, if sold by auction, would realise some thousands for the Club.

Such is this interesting Society, of which this imperfect record has been attempted. Much more could be said, and many more pages filled in its praise—but space is lacking. Pleasant as are its associations, old and new, all must centre round the satirical yet ever genial spirit of THACKERAY, whose portrait fittingly becomes the frontispiece of this volume. Thackeray—whose heart was in the place—"the G., the little G.," his ever-welcome haunt.

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The Garrick Club

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